mamotte shugogetten

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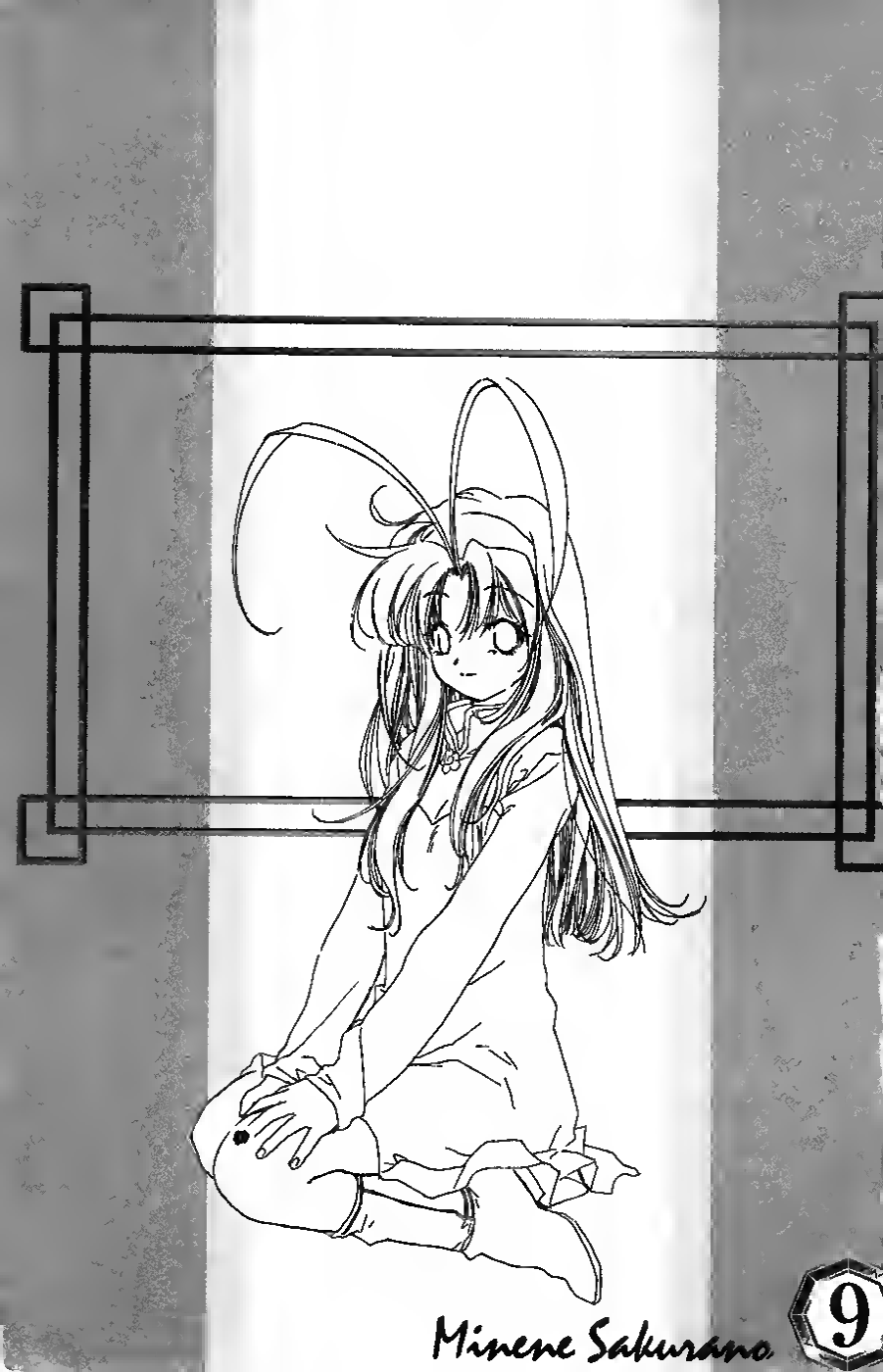
minene Nekurano


Minene Sakurano
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Mamotte Shugogetten Volume 5
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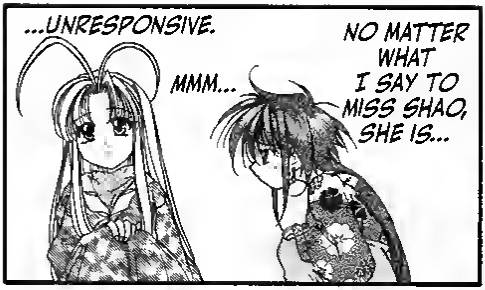
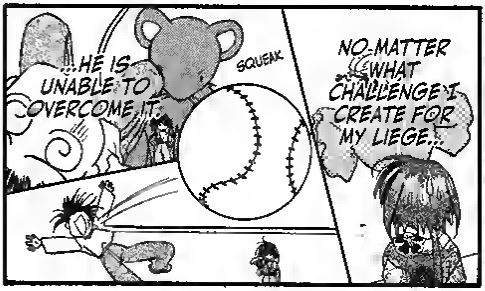
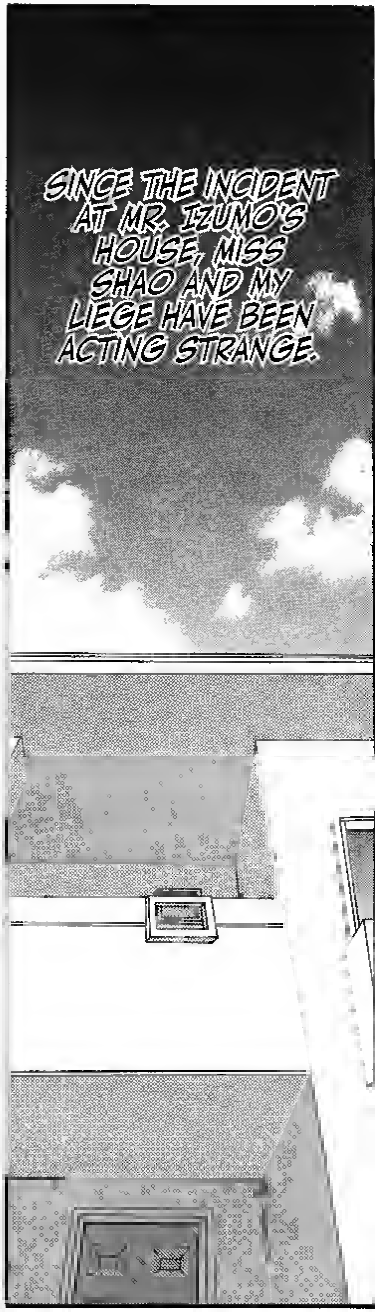
CHAPTER 57
MELANCHOLY OF THE BANNAN CHITEN (PART 1)


...UNRESPONSIVE.
MMM...
NO MATTER WHAT I SAY TO MISS SHAO, SHE IS...

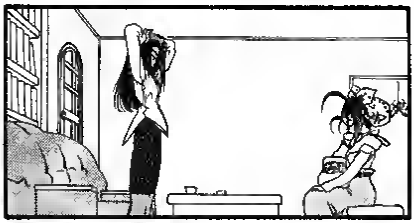

...HE IS UNABLE TO OVERCOME IT.
SQUEAK
NO MATTER WHAT CHALLENGE I CREATE FOR MY LIEGE...

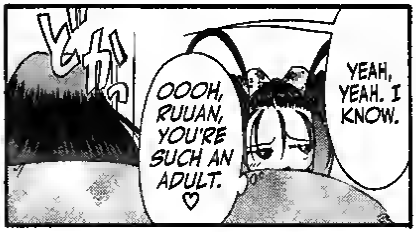
ANY WAY YOU LOOK AT IT, IT SEEMS THERE'S NO PLACE FOR ME. SO I SIT HERE...LIKE THIS...


SINCE THE INCIDENT AT MR. IZUMO'S HOUSE, MISS SHAO AND MY LIEGE HAVE BEEN ACTING STRANGE.

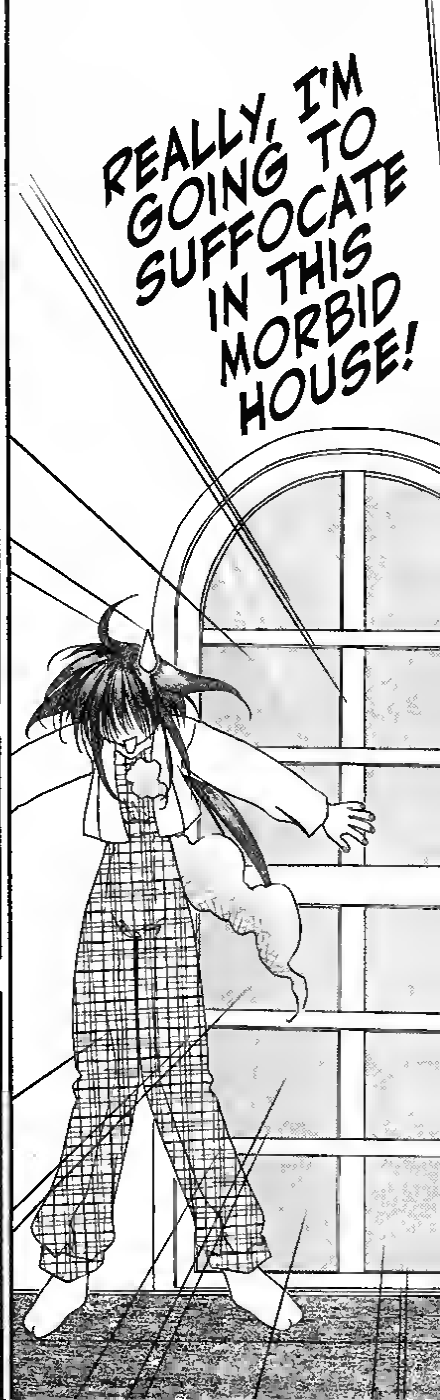
TASUKE IS JUST...TASUKE. THAT BOY CAN'T EVER MAKE UP HIS MIND TO DO ANYTHING.
SHAO IS UPSET BECAUSE OF IZUMO.
...AND SIP TEA WITH-THE-SISTER OF MY LIEGE.
NOT ACTUALLY SIPPING.
AND TO TOP IT OFF, THERE'S YOU!
.....
SLAM
YOU'VE BEEN HERE FOR HOW LONG NOW? A LONG TIME! AND YOU WON'T EVEN TRY TALKING TO ME!!

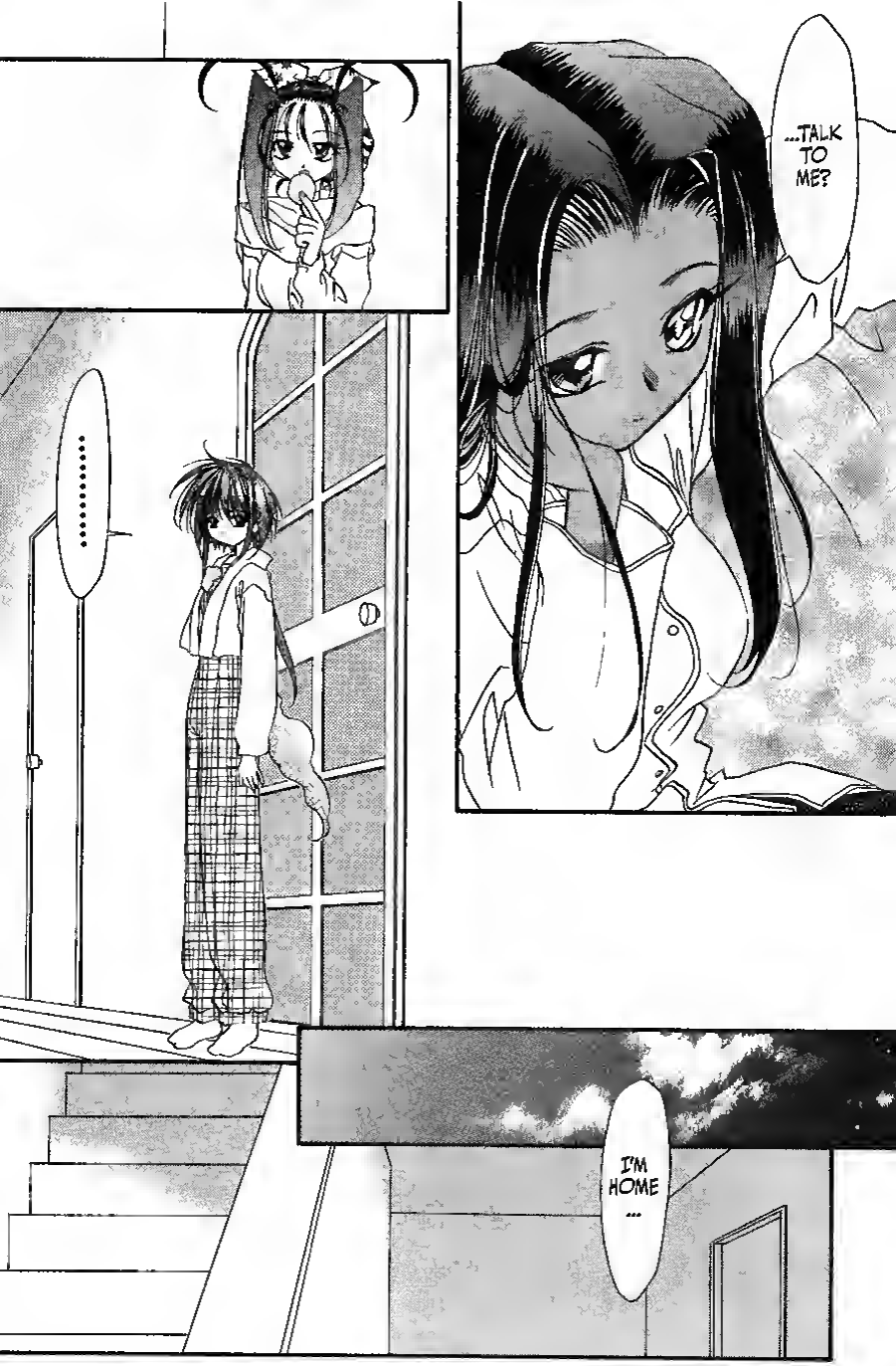
CALM DOWN, SIS.
DON'T YOU KNOW NOTHING GOOD COMES FROM GETTING ANGRY?




YEAH, YEAH. I KNOW.
OOOH, RUUAN, YOU'RE SUCH AN ADULT. ♡

BUT I CAN'T FIGURE IT OUT.
WHY WON'T KIRYUU...


REALLY, I'M GOING TO SUFFOCATE IN THIS MORBID HOUSE!

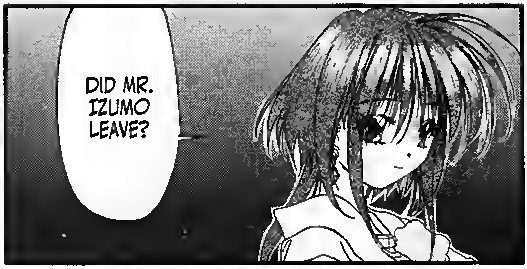

...TALK TO ME?
.....
I'M HOME ...

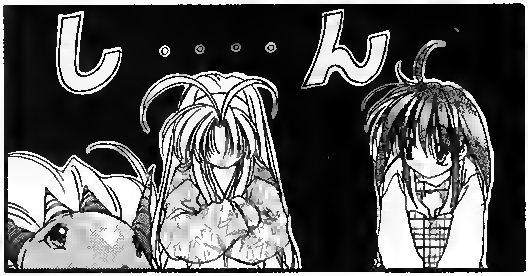
!!!
WEL-
COME...
HOME.
HE SAID
HE'D HELP
ME DO MY
SHOPPING.
OH, UMM...
I BUMPED
INTO MR.
IZUMO ON
THE WAY.
OH,
HE
DID?

AWKWARD...
HOLD ON, KURYUU!
UH... UMM...
NISS SHAO
HEY, HOLD ON. STOP A SECOND.
WHAT'S WRONG? WHY DON'T YOU TRY BEING NICER TO SIS?

THINGS DO NOT CHANGE.
THIS WORLD IS THE SAME AS ALL THE OTHERS.
AT LEAST TO ME IT IS.
.....
...THIS PLACE ISN'T LIKE THE WORLDS WE LIVED IN BEFORE.
I UNDE STAND HOW YO FEEL. BUT...
BES-DES...
...IT IS BETTER THAT IT DOES NOT CHANGE.
OH REALLY?!

FINE, YOU CAN JUST KEEP ON THINKING THAT WAY IF YOU WANT.
MISS SHAO.


DID MR. IZUMO LEAVE?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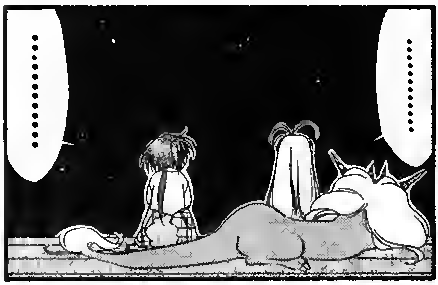
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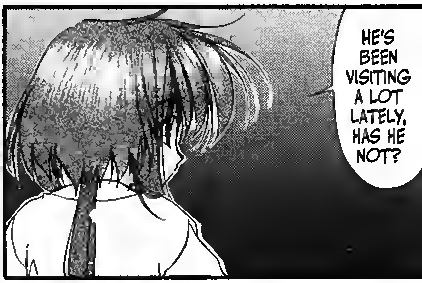
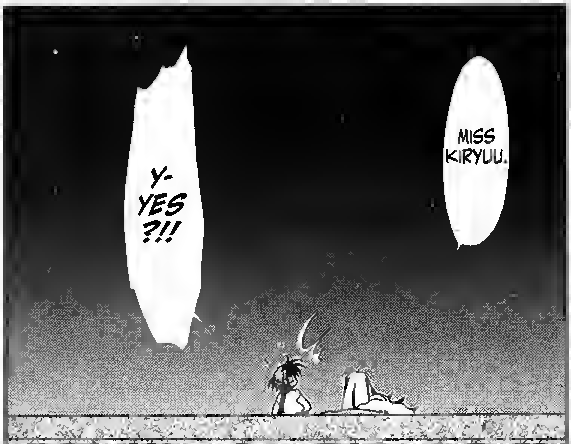

・・・・・・・・・
HE'S BEEN VISITING A LOT LATELY, HAS HE NOT?


Y-YES ?!!
MISS KIRYUU.

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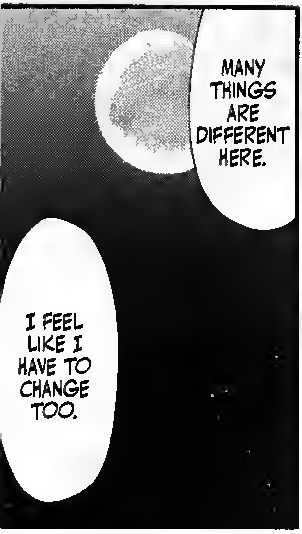

MANY THINGS ARE DIFFERENT HERE.
I FEEL LIKE I HAVE TO CHANGE TOO.

...!

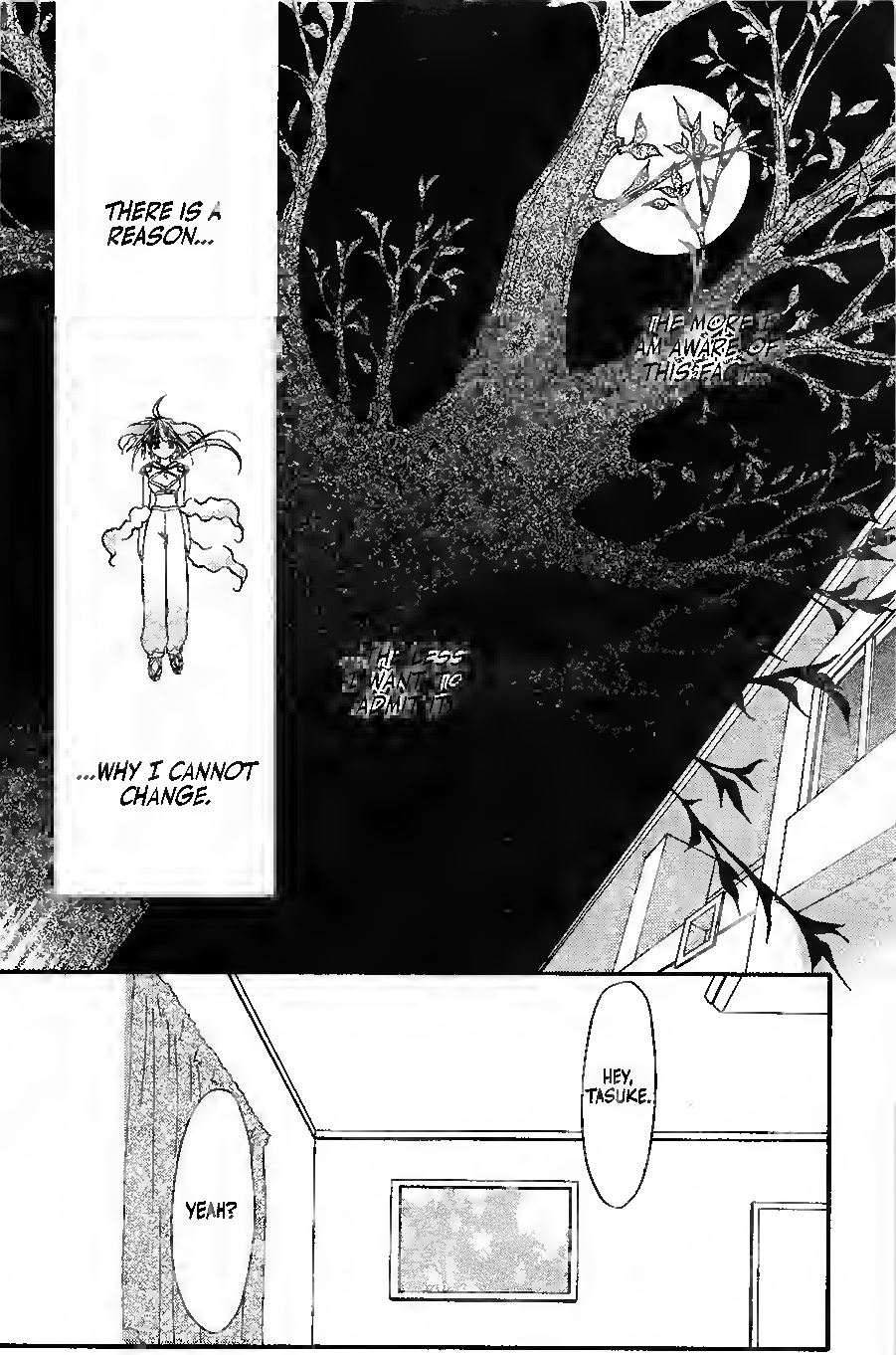
HAVE I...
...CHANGED FROM BEFORE?

MISS SHAO ...

BUT...

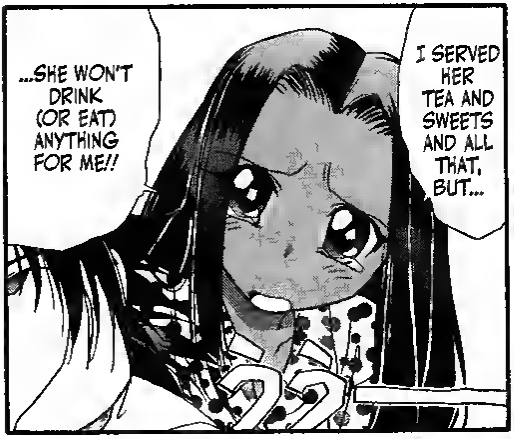
THIS GLOOMY FEELING I CAN'T SHAKE.
THIS INSECURITY. WILL THEY GO AWAY IF I CHANGE?
IF I CAN UNDERSTAND THE THINGS I DON'T UNDERSTAND, WILL I BE ABLE TO CHANGE?

...I THINK I AM...
...AFRAID OF CHANGE.
I KNOW HOW SHE FEELS.
I AM PAINFULLY AWARE...
...THAT THIS IS NOT THE SAME PLACE...
...AS THE PLACES WE HAVE BEEN BEFORE.

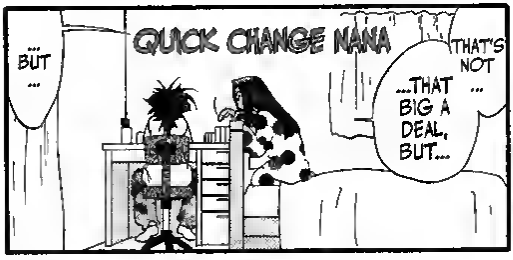

THERE IS A REASON...
...WHY I CANNOT CHANGE.
THE MORE I AM AWARE OF THIS FACT...
I DON'T WANT TO ADMIT IT
HEY, TASUKE.
YEAH?

HMM...
I DON'T GET IT!!

WHY IS KIRYUU IGNORING ME?


...SHE WON'T DRINK (OR EAT) ANYTHING FOR ME!!
I SERVED HER TEA AND SWEETS AND ALL THAT, BUT...

AS ALWAYS.
...I THOUGHT, OKAY, I'LL POUR HER A CUP OF TEA. I INVITED HER TO COME SIT WITH ME.
I MEAN, LIKE, EARLIER WHEN KIRYUU WAS ALL SPACED OUT...

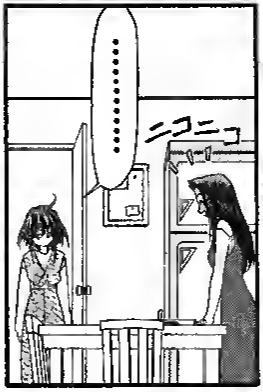

QUICK CHANGE NANA
...BUT ...
...THAT BIG A DEAL, BUT...
THAT'S NOT ...

THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN NANA AND KIRYUU
...THAT'S NOT THE ONLY THING.
MORN-ING.
G'NIGHT.
I KNOW IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT SHE'S NEVER GREETED ME BACK!!
SHE'S IGNORING ME ON PURPOSE, ISN'T SHE?!
HEY, TASUKE, YOU THINK SHE'S IGNORING ME ON PURPOSE?
HMM...
TASUKE.
ARE YOU LISTEN-ING?
HMM?
LISTEN TO ME, YOU!! I'M NOT GIVING SOME IDIOTIC SOLILOQUY OR ANYTHING!!
G'AAH!!

OH.♡
MORNING, KIRYUU!
WHEN I WENT TO THE KITCHEN, SHE WAS ACTING DIFFERENT.

THE NEXT DAY

HUH?!
YOUR BREAK... FAST??!!!
ENJOY! ♡
*BREAK-FAST???
FOR MISS KIRYUU -SHIKI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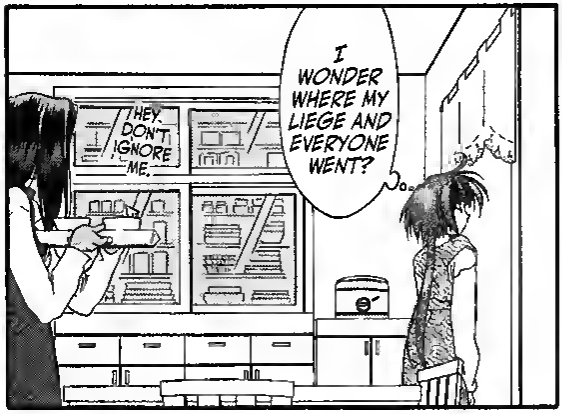
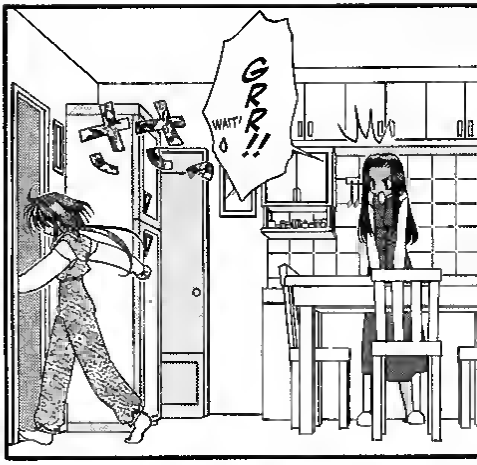
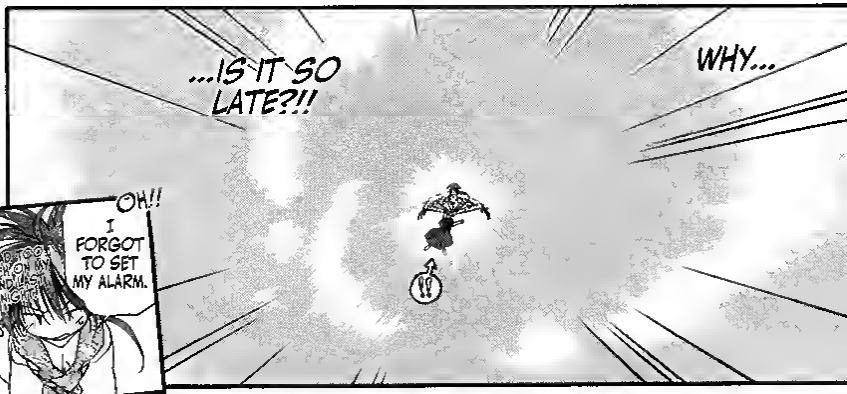

I WONDER WHERE MY LIEGE AND EVERYONE WENT?
HEY, DON'T IGNORE ME.

I BET YOU'RE WONDERING WHERE TASUKE AND EVERYONE ARE, HUH?
!!
YOU KNOW, YOU CAN JUST ASK ME.
.....
YOU REALLY SUCK AT WAKING UP, DON'T YOU?
EVERYONE TRIED CALLING YOU, BUT
!!
WE ENTER THE SECOND HOUR!!





THE BIT ABOUT KIRYUU SETTING HER ALARM IS INCLUDED AS A SIDE STORY IN VOLUME 8, "KIRYUU'S MORNING

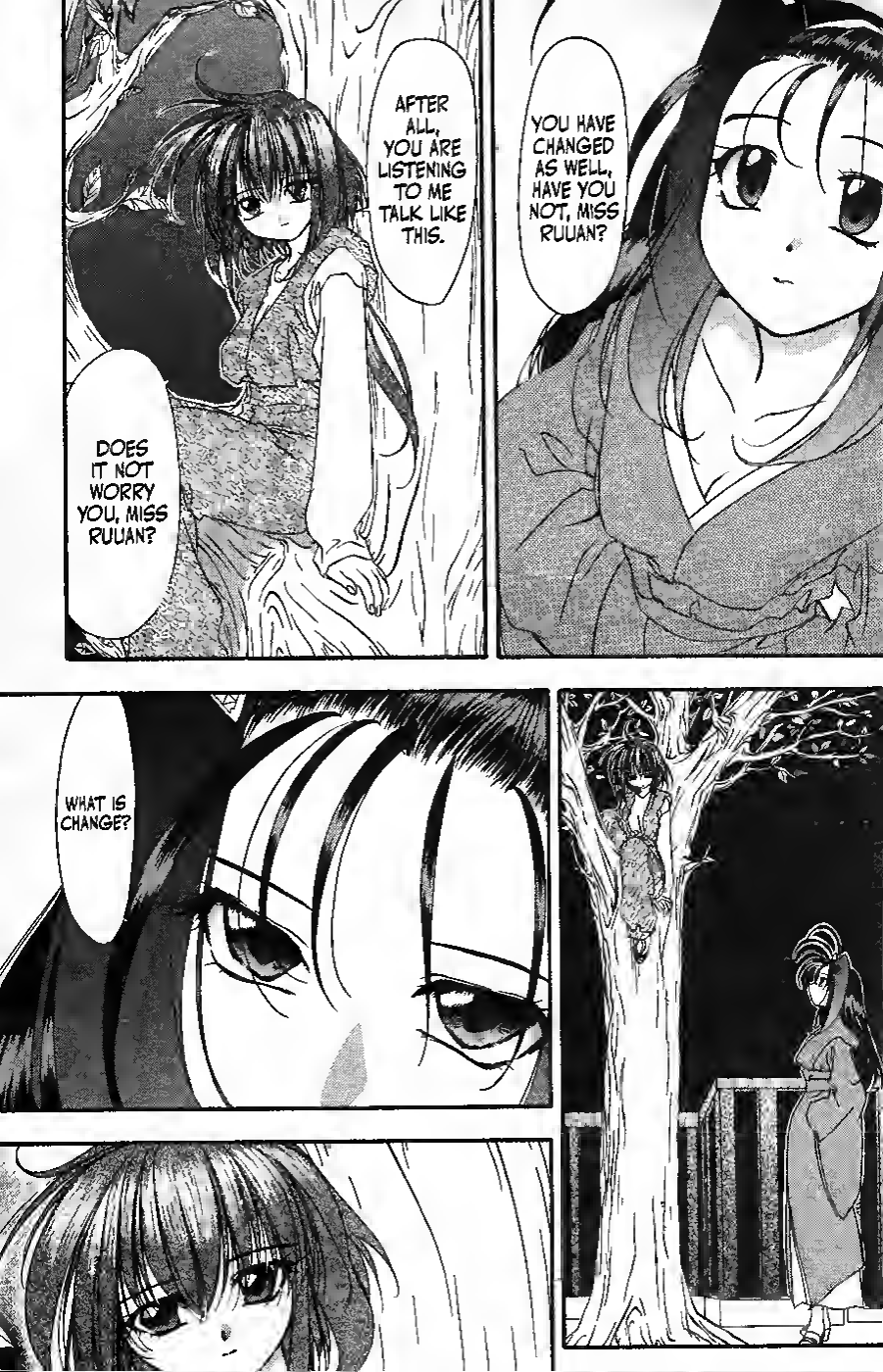
WELL!! THAT WAS CLOSE, I JUST BARELY HELD ON!
IF I WASN'T CAREFUL, I COULD'VE FALLEN OFF. AH HA HA...
WHOA!! WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!!
OH, WE'RE LANDING ALREADY?
JUST WHEN I WAS STARTING TO HAVE FUN.

DO NOT FOLLOW ME ANY-MORE.
WHY DO YOU BOTHER WITH ME?
"THAT EXPRES-SION"...?
WHAT EXPRESS-SION?
...WITH THAT EXPRES-SION ON YOUR FACE?

WHAT IS THIS? WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
WHY ARE YOU KIND TO ME?

SIGH
MISS SHAO IS NOT FEELING WELL, SO I CANNOT CONSULT HER.
HMM. ♡ MAYBE RUUAN COULD BE OF SERVICE FOR A CHANGE. TELL ME WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND.
ACTING REALLY NICE SO NANA WILL LIKE HER!!
.....

MISS RUUAN, WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ABOUT CHANGING IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE WORLD WE NOW FIND OURSELVES IN?
MISS SHAO THINKS ...
...THIS WORLD IS VERY DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER WORLDS WE LIVED IN, AND ...
...THAT SHE MUST CHANGE AS WELL.
SHE EXPRESSED BOTH A DESIRE TO CHANGE...
...AND A FEAR OF CHANGING.
.....


DOES IT NOT WORRY YOU, MISS RUUAN?
AFTER ALL, YOU ARE LISTENING TO ME TALK LIKE THIS.
YOU HAVE CHANGED AS WELL, HAVE YOU NOT, MISS RUUAN?
WHAT IS CHANGE?

I HAVEN'T CHANGED.
WHAT DO YOU THINK CHANGE IS?
TO LEARN SOMETHING THAT YOU NEVER KNEW BEFORE?
SINCE COMING HERE ...
...I'VE LEARNED A LOT OF THINGS, BUT...
...I WOULDN'T SAY I'VE CHANGED.
I HAVEN'T TRIED TO CHANGE OR ANYTHING, IT'S JUST THAT...

IT IS JUST AS MISS RUUAN SAYS.

IF TO CHANGE IS TO LEARN, THEN...

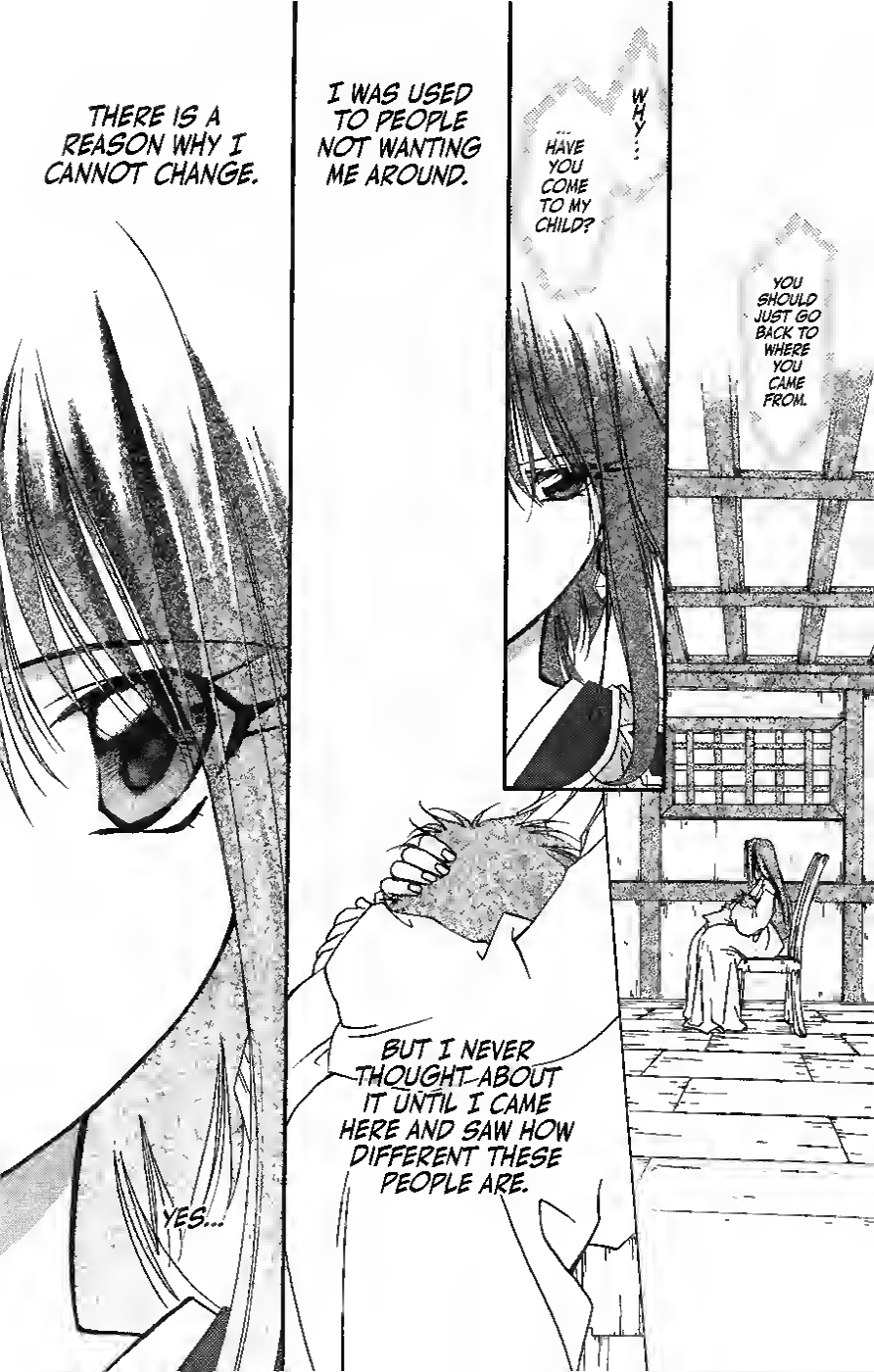
...I HAVE LEARNED MUCH ALREADY.

THERE IS SO MUCH HAPPINESS THAT IT SORROWS ME.
THERE IS KINDNESS. THERE IS PEACE.
THERE ARE THINGS HERE I HAVE NEVER EXPERIENCED BEFORE.
BUT...THAT IS WHY...

...I TRIED TO ACT
AS THOUGH I DID
NOT NOTICE...

PLEASE TELL ME...
...WHY YOU DISLIKE ME SO MUCH.
YES...
THERE IS A REASON WHY I CANNOT CHANGE.

IN THE PAST...
...I ACCEPTED MY PLACE.
WE DON'T NEED SOME-ONE LIKE YOU.
IT WAS SOMETHING I DID NOT THINK OR DESIRE TO CHANGE.

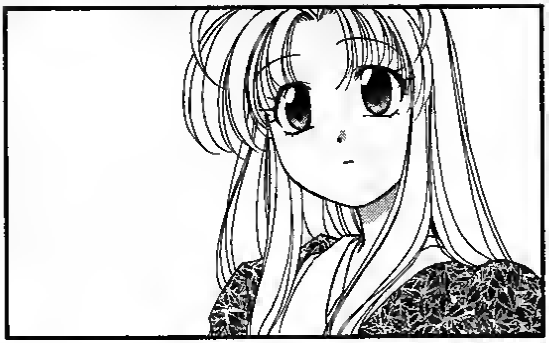

WHY...
...HAVE YOU COME TO MY CHILD?
YOU SHOULD JUST GO BACK TO WHERE YOU CAME FROM.
I WAS USED TO PEOPLE NOT WANTING ME AROUND.
THERE IS A REASON WHY I CANNOT CHANGE.
BUT I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT IT UNTIL I CAME HERE AND SAW HOW DIFFERENT THESE PEOPLE ARE.
YES...

CHAPTER 58
MELANCHOLY OF THE BANNAN CHITEN (PART 2)

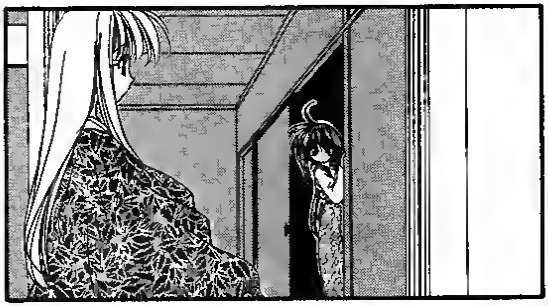
PLEASE TELL ME...
...WHY YOU DISLIKE ME SO MUCH.
WHY...
...DO YOU ASK ME THIS?
T IS NOT I WHO DISLIKE OU, BUT ATHER...
...YOU WHO DISLIKE ME, IS IT NOT?

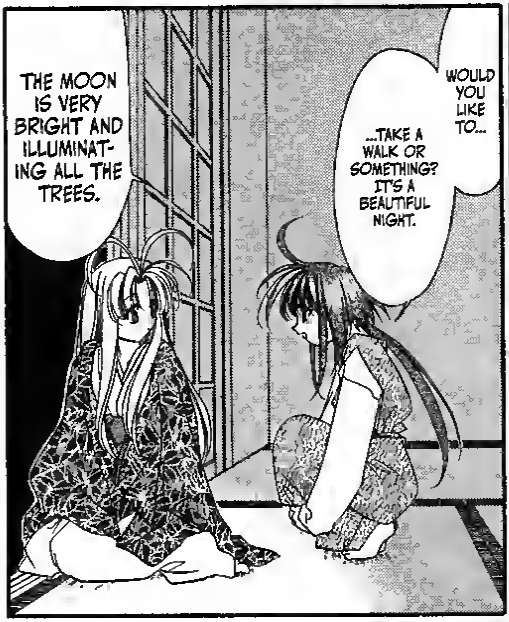
I WHO DISLIKE YOU...?
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?

I UNDERSTAND THAT...
...CHALLENGES ARE NOT...
...SOMETHING PEOPLE SEEK. IT IS NATURAL THAT THEY RESENT THEM.
ESPECIALLY...
...THEIR FAMILIES.
KIRYU
THAT WOULD BE MUCH EASIER.
NANA SHOULD SIMPLY DESPISE ME LIKE THE OTHERS.



MISS SHAO, ARE YOU STILL NOT FEELING WELL?

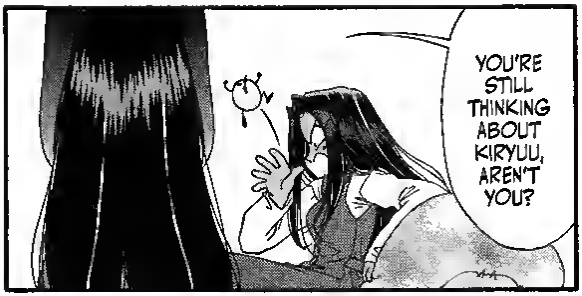


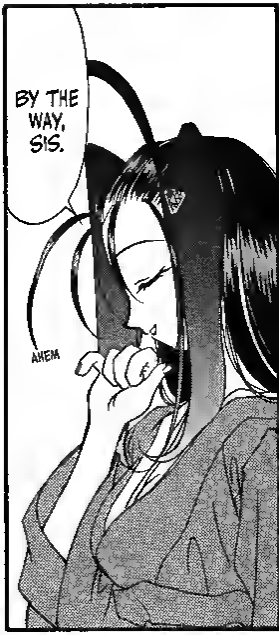

THE MOON IS VERY BRIGHT AND ILLUMINATING ALL THE TREES.
...TAKE A WALK OR SOMETHING? IT'S A BEAUTIFUL NIGHT.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO...

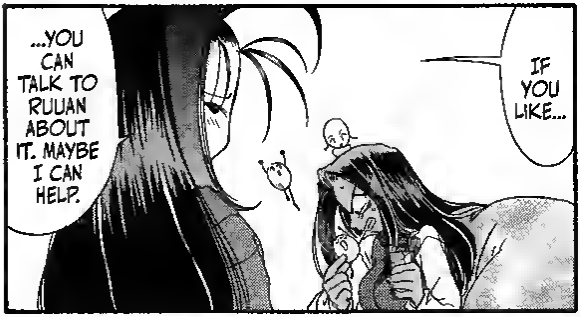
I...
...HAVE ALSO BEEN FEELING UNWELL.

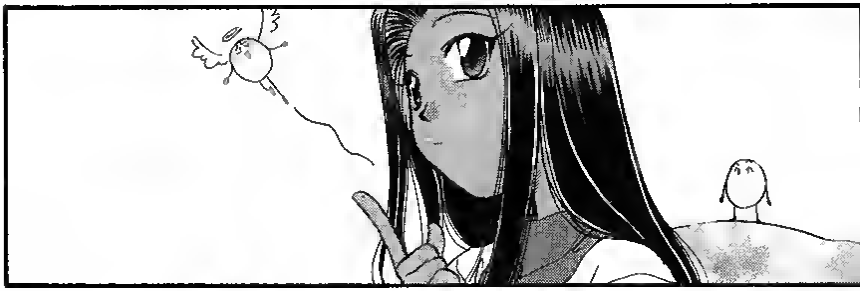
IT MIGHT CHEER US UP A LITTLE
HERE, SIS. ♡
IT'S SOME DEEELI-CIOUS ORANGE JUICE AND SWEETS.
AREN'T I SUUUCH A GOOD PERSON?
WHAT'S UP, RUUAN? THIS ISN'T LIKE YOU.

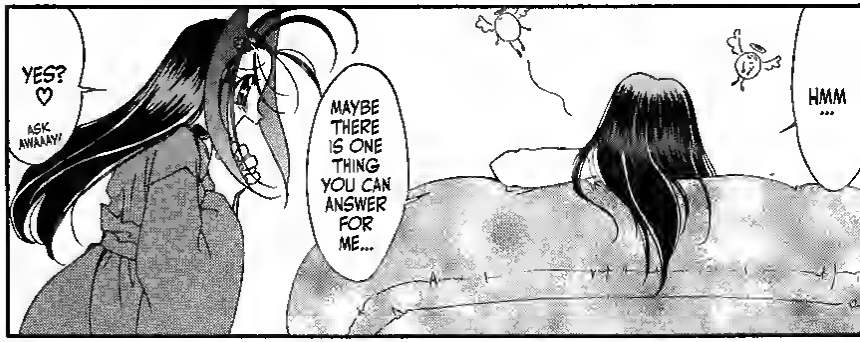
RIGHTFULLY SUSPICIOUS.


YOU'RE STILL THINKING ABOUT KIRYUU, AREN'T YOU?


BY THE WAY, SIS.
AHEM

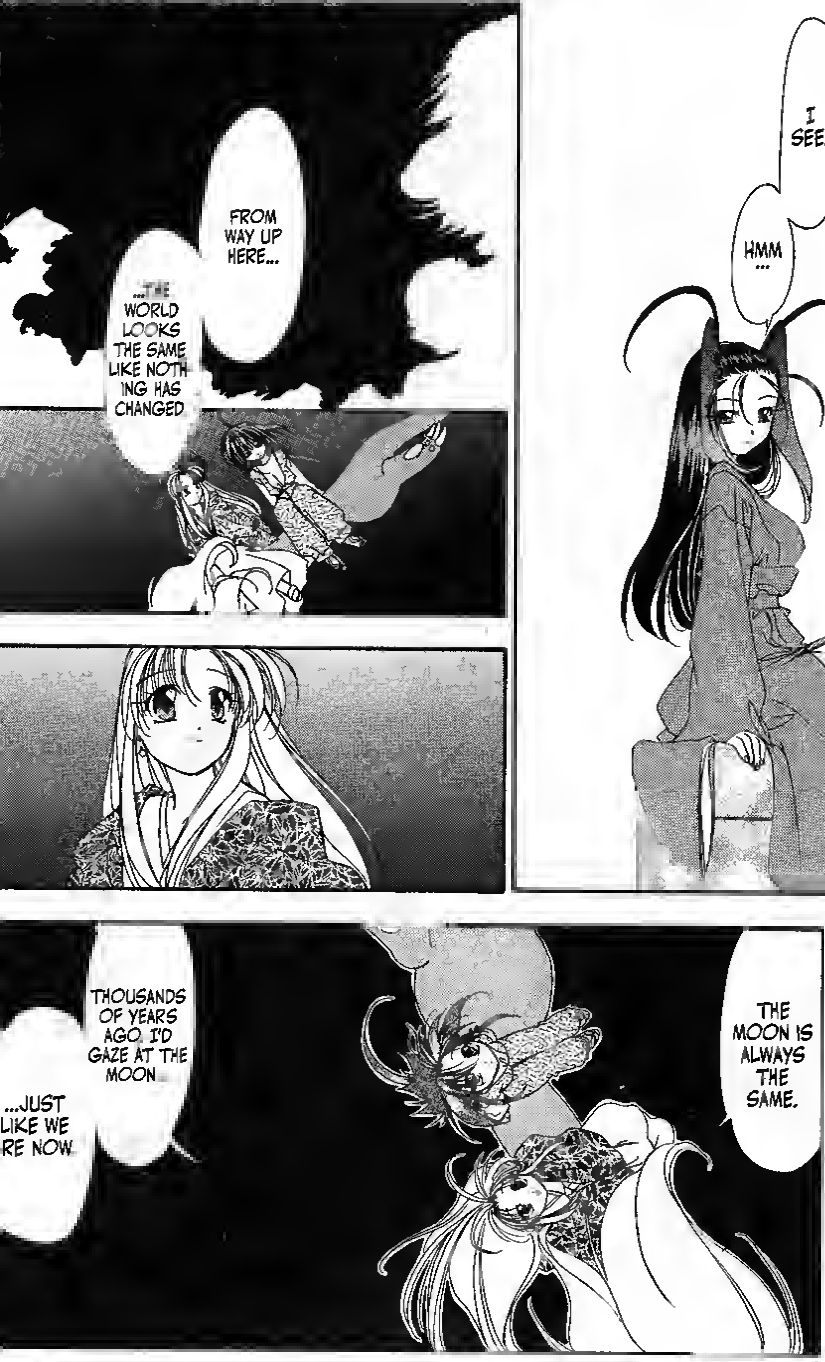

IF YOU LIKE...
...YOU CAN TALK TO RUUAN ABOUT IT. MAYBE I CAN HELP.



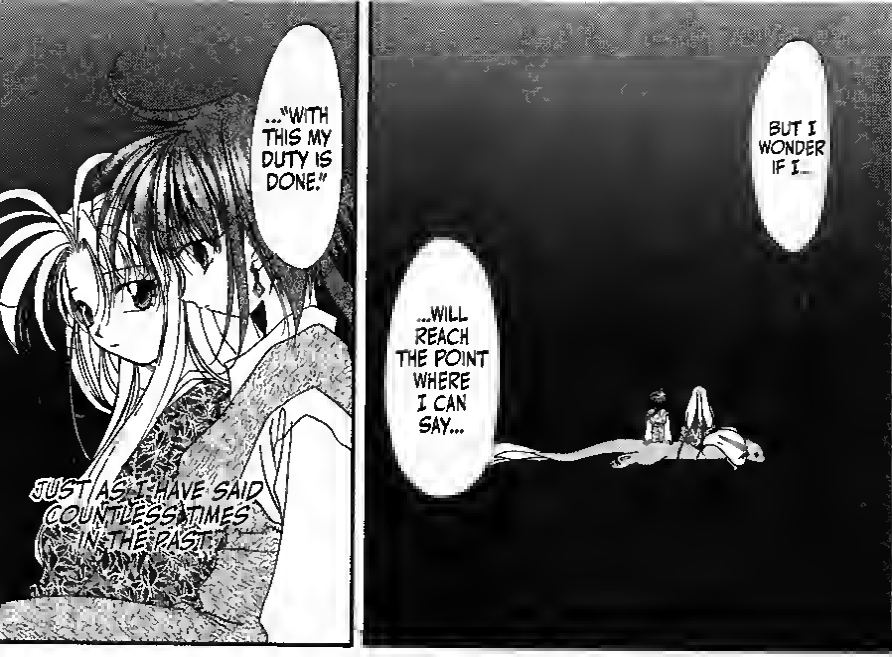

HMM ...
MAYBE THERE IS ONE THING YOU CAN ANSWER FOR ME...
YES? ♡
ASK AWAAAY!

I REALLY AM CURIOUS.
MMPH...
WHY DO YOU CAST THAT YOUTEN-WHATEVER ON STUFF LIKE THIS?
ARE YOU SERIOUS?
OH, UM, BE-CAUSE ...
...IT'S WAY MORE DELICIOUS THAT WAY!
WHY DON'T YOU...
...ASK ME WHAT YOU REALLY WANT TO KNOW?
I KNOW IT'S BOTHERING YOU.

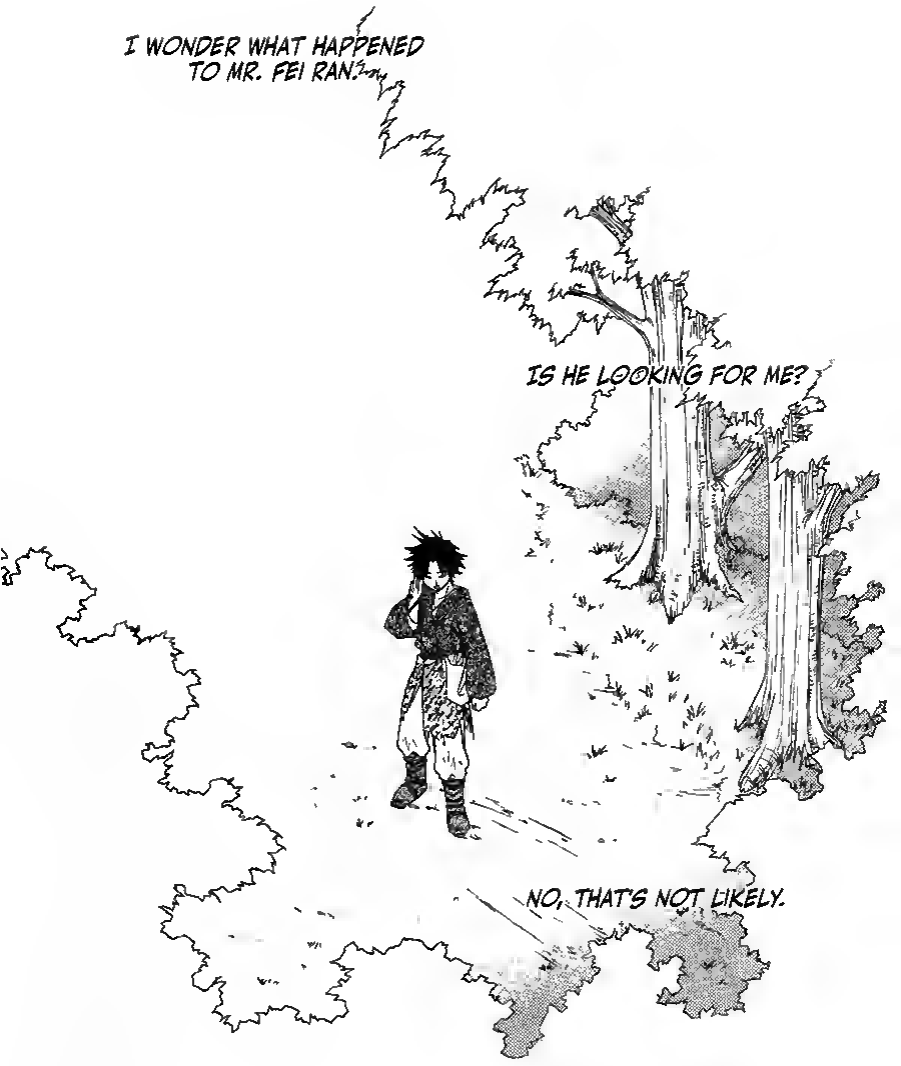
I WANTED TO ASK HER.
IF SHE WON'T TELL ME, THEN I'LL FIND OUT MYSELF.
すたっ
BUT THAT'S NOT REALLY SOMETHING...
...SOMEONE ELSE CAN ANSWER.
I DON'T LIKE THAT SHE THINKS I DISLIKE HER...
...EVEN THOUGH I DON'T.

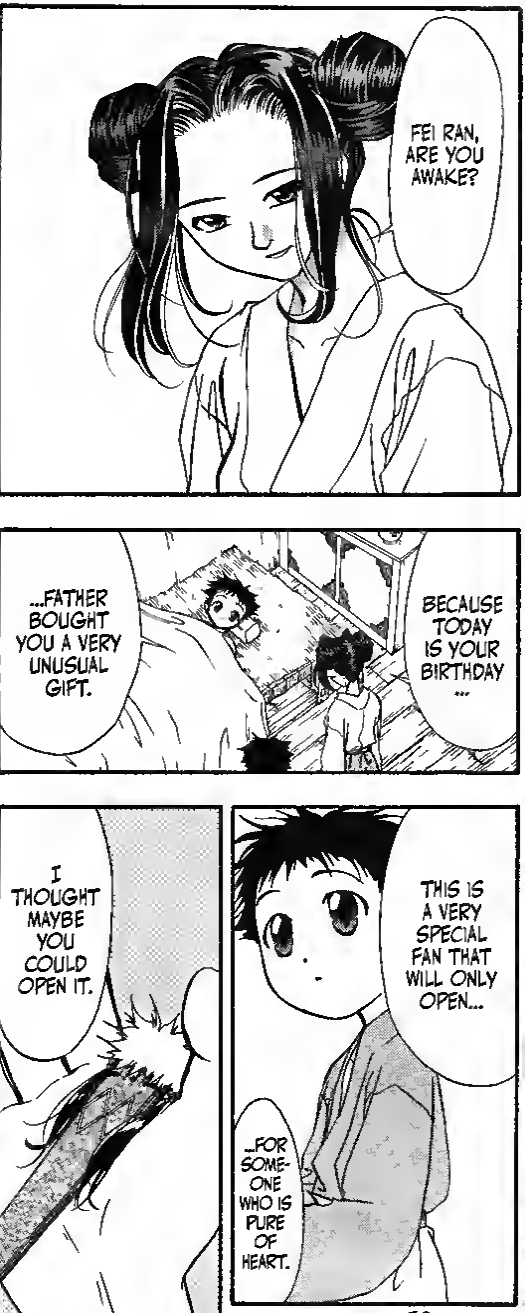

FROM WAY UP HERE...
...THE WORLD LOOKS THE SAME LIKE NOTH ING HAS CHANGED
HMM ...
I SEE.
THE MOON IS ALWAYS THE SAME.
THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO, I'D GAZE AT THE MOON...
...JUST LIKE WE RE NOW.

!!!
WHICH DO YOU PREFER-- THE WORLD THEN OR NOW?
MISS SHAO ...
.....
I KNOW WE CANNOT...
...I DON'T KNOW IF THAT IS ACCEPTABLE.
BEING HERE HAS CHANGED US, BUT..
...STAY HERE FOREVER.


...WITH THIS MY DUTY IS DONE."
JUST AS I HAVE SAID COUNTLESS TIMES IN THE PAST...
BUT I WONDER IF I...
...WILL REACH THE POINT WHERE I CAN SAY...

YES, WITH THIS MY DUTY IS DONE.


I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO MR. FEI RAN?
IS HE LOOKING FOR ME?
NO, THAT'S NOT LIKELY.
AFTER ALL, HE DID NOT LIKE ME...

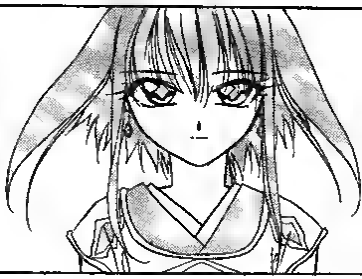

A LONG TIME AGO, DURING ONE OF CHINA'S PEACEFUL PERIODS BETWEEN WARS...
FEI RAN, ARE YOU AWAKE?
BECAUSE TODAY IS YOUR BIRTHDAY ...
...FATHER BOUGHT YOU A VERY UNUSUAL GIFT.
THIS IS A VERY SPECIAL FAN THAT WILL ONLY OPEN...
...FOR SOME-ONE WHO IS PURE OF HEART.
I THOUGHT MAYBE YOU COULD OPEN IT.

OUR INTRODUCTION WAS LIKE ALL OTHERS-- HE WAS SURPRISED AT FIRST, BUT THEN...
IT WAS THUS THAT I MET MR. FEI RAN.
IT SEEMS IT'S CALLED THE TAN-TENSEN.
...AFTER A WHILE, HE SMILED AND SAID...
NICE TO MEET YOU.

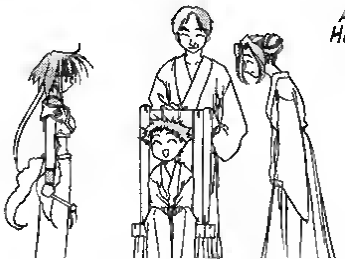
I KNOW....

...THEY ONLY SMILE BECAUSE THEY ARE IGNORANT OF WHAT LIES BEFORE THEM.

HE SMILES BECAUSE HE DOES NOT KNOW.

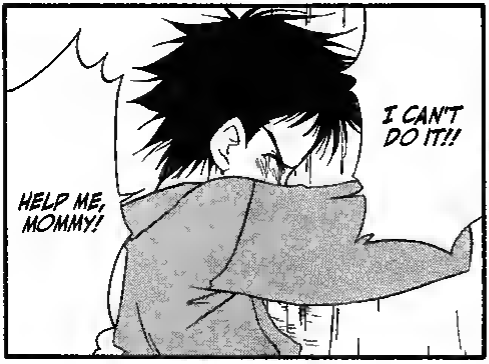


AS DOES HIS FAMILY.



THIS IS MERELY CHILD'S PLAY, IS IT NOT?
IT WOULD BE STRANGER IF HE COULD NOT DO IT.

HE'LL DIE IF HE DOES WHAT YOU ASK!!
MY LIEGE, IT IS A CHALLENGE COME DOWN BY YOURSELF

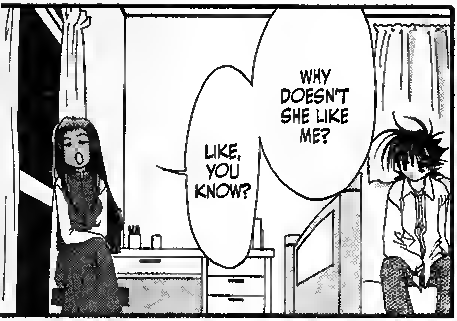

I CAN'T DO IT!!
HELP ME, MOMMY!

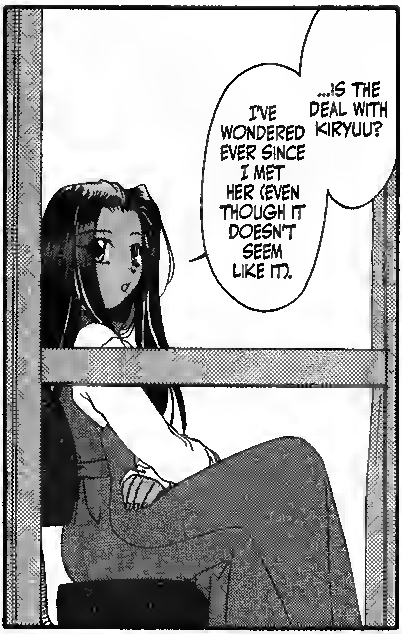
HE IS NOT A NORMAL CHILD!!
MY LIEGE.
THE SUN WILL SET IF YOU CONTINUE TO WAIT FOR ASSISTANCE.

.....

WHY HAVE YOU COME TO MY CHILD?
I SHOULD HAVE NEVER BOUGHT THAT FAN.
THEIR WORDS ARE A MATTER OF COURSE. THEY ALWAYS SAY THE SAME THING.
WORDS THAT SEEMED ONLY NATURAL.
YOU SHOULD JUST GO ON BACK TO WHERE YOU CAME FROM.
WE DON'T NEED SOMEONE LIKE YOU.

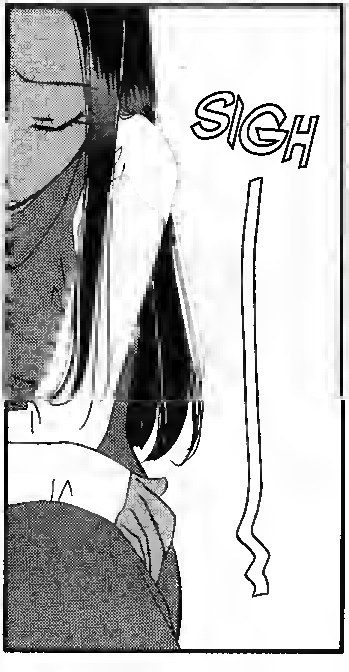
I KNEW FROM THE START, WITHOUT IT BEING SAID.
IT IS BECAUSE OF THOSE WORDS...
...THAT I WAS ABLE TO FULFILL MY DUTY.
THE CLOSER I CAME TO FULFILLING MY DUTIES, THE NEARER THE TIME OF SEPARATION DREW...
...AND THOSE WORDS MADE IT SO THAT I DID NOT HAVE TO SUFFER WHEN IT CAME.
TASUKE ROOM
HEY, TASUKE.
WHAT DO YOU THINK...


WHY DOESN'T SHE LIKE ME?
LIKE, YOU KNOW?


...IS THE DEAL WITH KIRYUU?
I'VE WONDERED EVER SINCE I MET HER (EVEN THOUGH IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE IT).

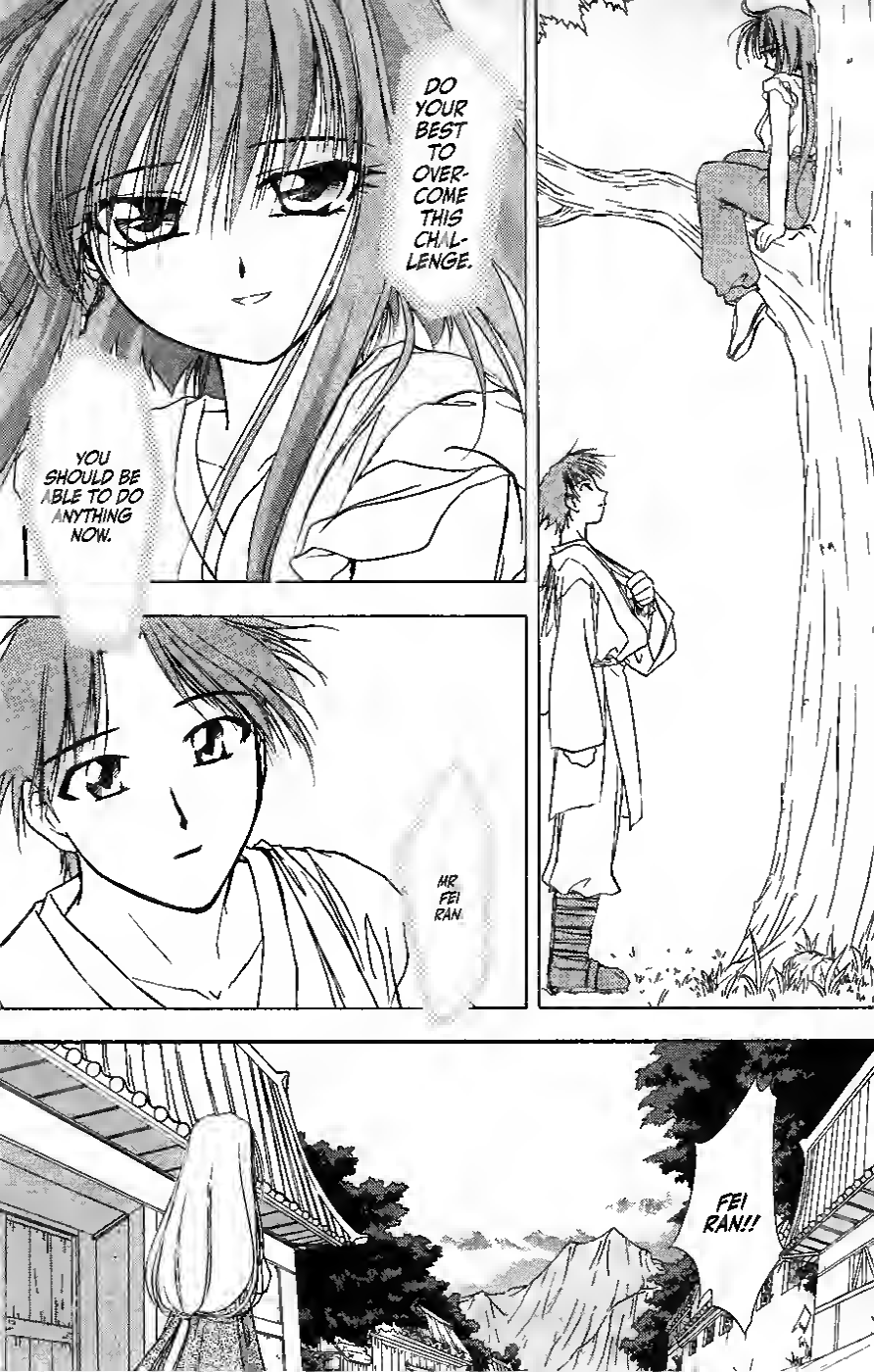
DID I DO SOME-THING?!
I WANT TO KNOW.

I NEVER WOULD HAVE DREAMED THAT KIRYUU THOUGHT I DIDN'T LIKE HER.
THAT TOTALLY SURPRISED ME.


SIGH

YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER THAT SHAO AND KIRYUU (AND RUUAN)...
...ARE SPIRITS.
SOMETIMES IT'S REALLY, REALLY HARD TO UNDERSTAND THEM, EVEN IF WE WANT TO.
YOU KNOW?
THEN,
...ISN'T THERE SOME WAY WE CAN...
...LEARN TO UNDERSTAND THEM?
OH...HE'S LOST IN HIS OWN WORRIES AGAIN...
SIGH... I'LL THINK ABOUT IT MYSELF.
SORRY TO BUG YOU.

I LEFT HIM IN THE MOUN-TAINS.
WHERE DID YOU TAKE OUR FEI RAN?!
COME BACK HERE, KIRYUU!!
RETURN HOME FROM HERE.
MY LIEGE.
THIS IS YOUR FINAL CHALLENGE.
...HAVE TO SEE THE WORRIED EXPRES-SIONS ON YOUR PARENTS' FACES.
I WILL NO LONG-ER...
THEN MY DUTIES WILL BE FULFILLED AND I SHALL RETURN TO THE TANTENSEN.


DO YOUR BEST TO OVER-COME THIS CHAL-LENGE.
YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO DO ANYTHING NOW.
HR FEI RAN
FEI RAN!!

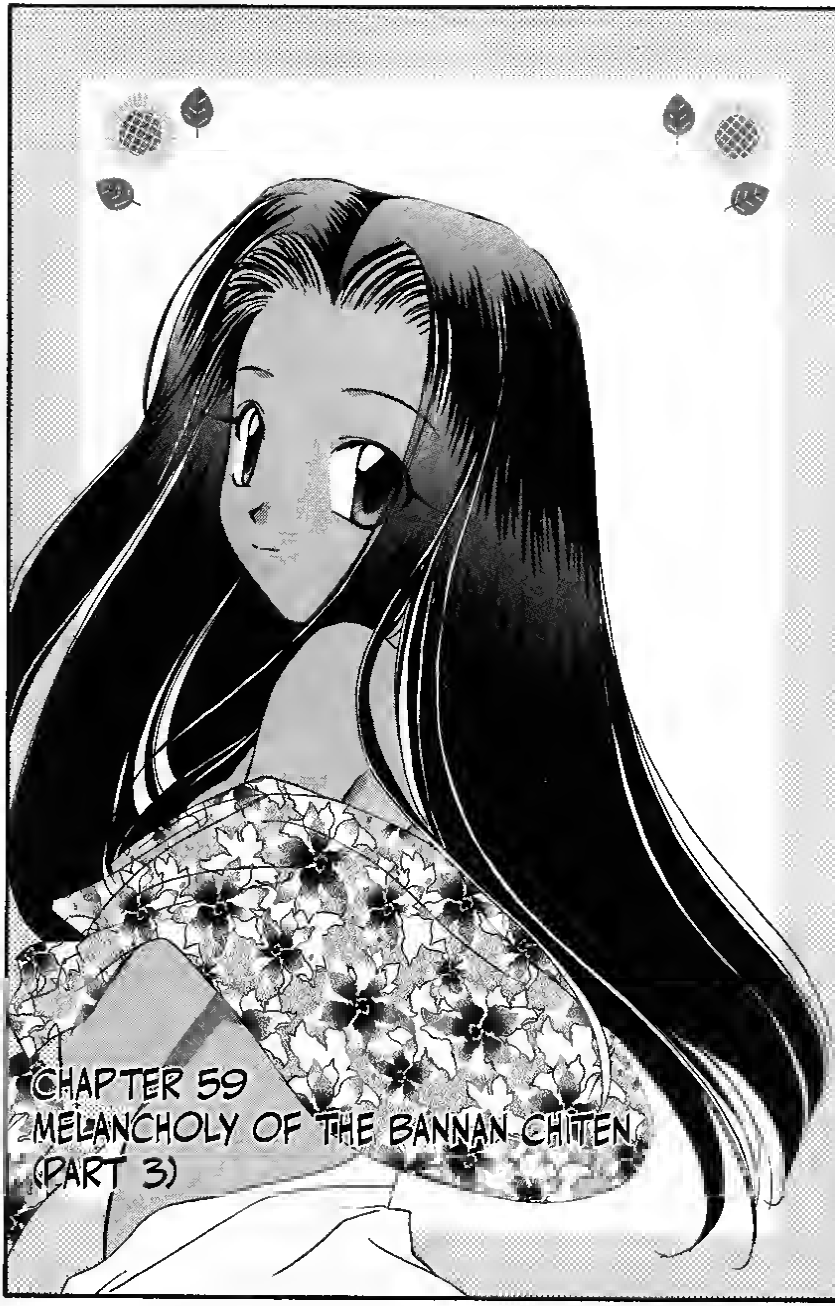
MOTHER, WHERE'S KIRYUU?
WHILE COMING DOWN THE MOUNTAIN, I THOUGHT ABOUT A LOT OF THE THINGS THAT HAVE HAPPENED, AND...
...I FINALLY UNDER-STAND.

I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO MR. FEI RAN.
IS HE LOOKING FOR ME?
NO...
THAT'S NOT LIKELY.
KIRYUU TAUGHT ME...
...TO OVERCOME MY OWN WEAK-NESSES.
AFTER ALL, HE DID NOT LIKE ME...
YES, WITH THIS MY DUTY IS DONE.

MISS SHAO
WHAT SHALL I DO?
THAT IS WHY I CANNOT CHANGE.
I CANNOT CONTINUE UNLESS THEY DISLIKE ME.
THEY *MUST* DISLIKE ME HERE.
BUT...
...I...

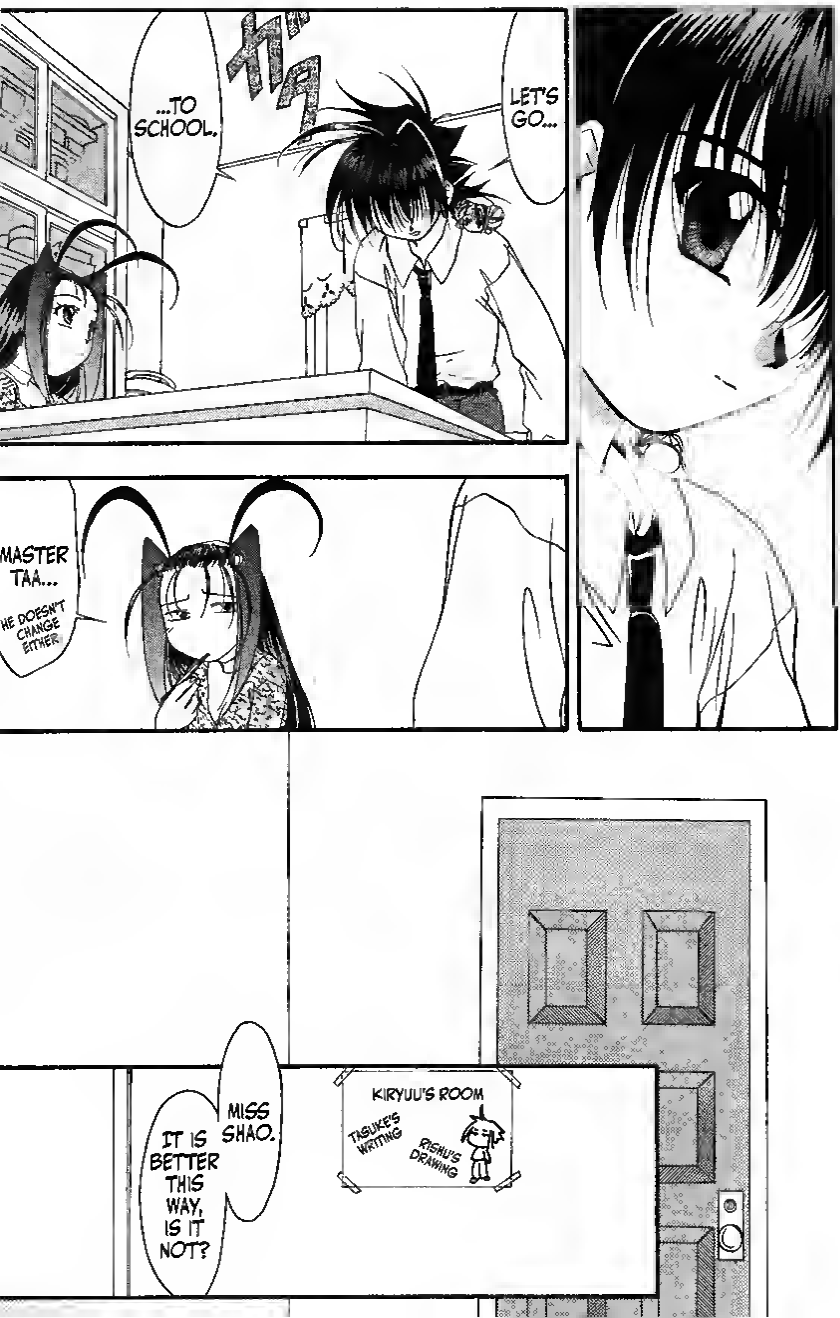
IN TRUTH...
...I NEVER ENJOYED BEING DISLIKED.
OH.
MORNING, MISS KIRYUU.
MORN-ING.
ガタ。

I THOUGHT ABOUT IT A LOT YESTER-DAY, AND...
...I'M OVER IT.
KIRYUU.
I DON'T...
...CARE ABOUT YOU ANY-MORE.


CHAPTER 59
MELANCHOLY OF THE BANNAN CHITEN
(PART 3)

I DON'T ...
...CARE ABOUT YOU ANY-MORE.
NISS NANA ...?
.....

MISS KIR-YUU!
WAIT, MISS KIRYUU!!
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
MASTER TAA.

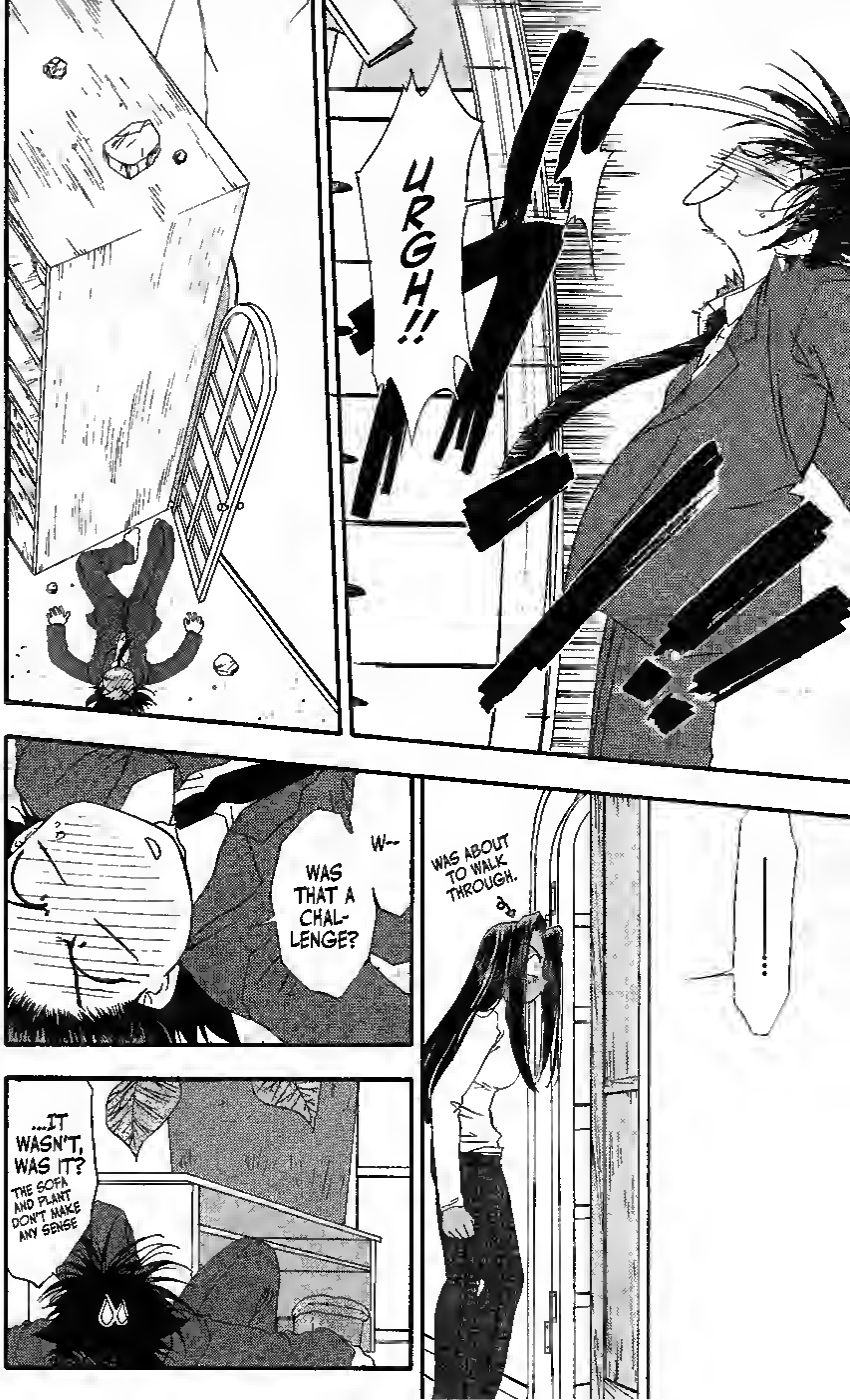

LET'S GO...
...TO SCHOOL.
MASTER TAA...
HE DOESN'T CHANGE EITHER
KIRYUU'S ROOM
TASUKE'S WRITING
RISHU'S DRAWING
MISS SHAO.
IT IS BETTER THIS WAY, IS IT NOT?

.....
NOW I CAN FULFILL MY DUTIES..
...WITHOUT RESER-VATION.
IT IS ONLY NAT-URAL...
...THAT I BE DISLIKED.

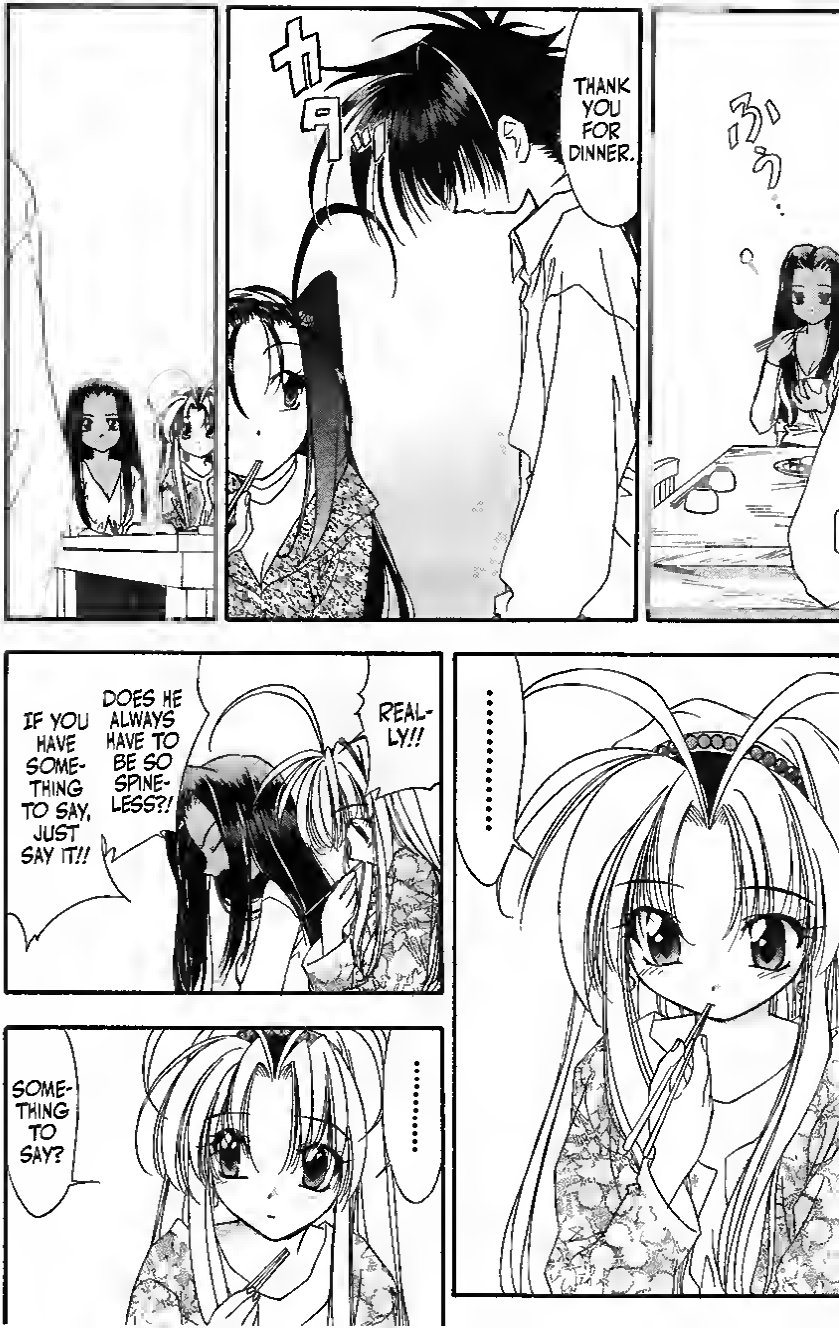
I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOU ANYMORE.
MISS SHAO...
SHE DISLIKES ME, DOES SHE NOT?
I AM DISLIKED ONCE AGAIN.
WHY DO YOU BOTHER WITH ME?
WHY DO YOU TALK TO ME WITH THAT EXPRESSION ON YOUR FACE?
DO NOT FOLLOW ME ANY-MORE.

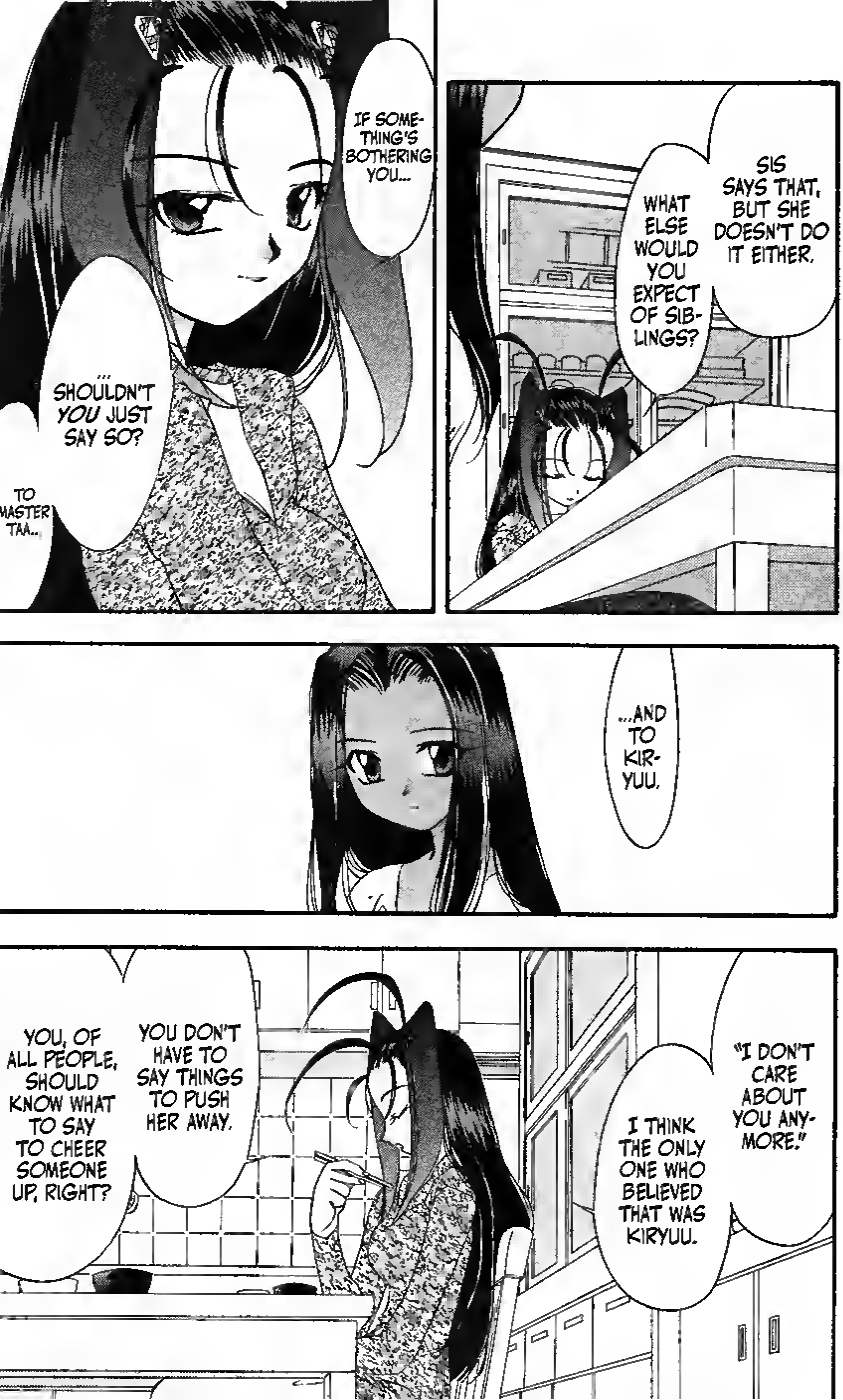
THINGS MIGHT HAVE ENDED...
...WITHOUT HER DISLIKING ME HAD I NOT.
HOWEVER...
IT IS NOT I WHO DISLIKES YOU, BUT RATHER...
...YOU WHO DISLIKES ME, IS IT NOT?
I SHOULD NOT HAVE SAID THAT.
...IT IS PROBABLY BETTER OFF THIS WAY.
MISS KIRYUU?

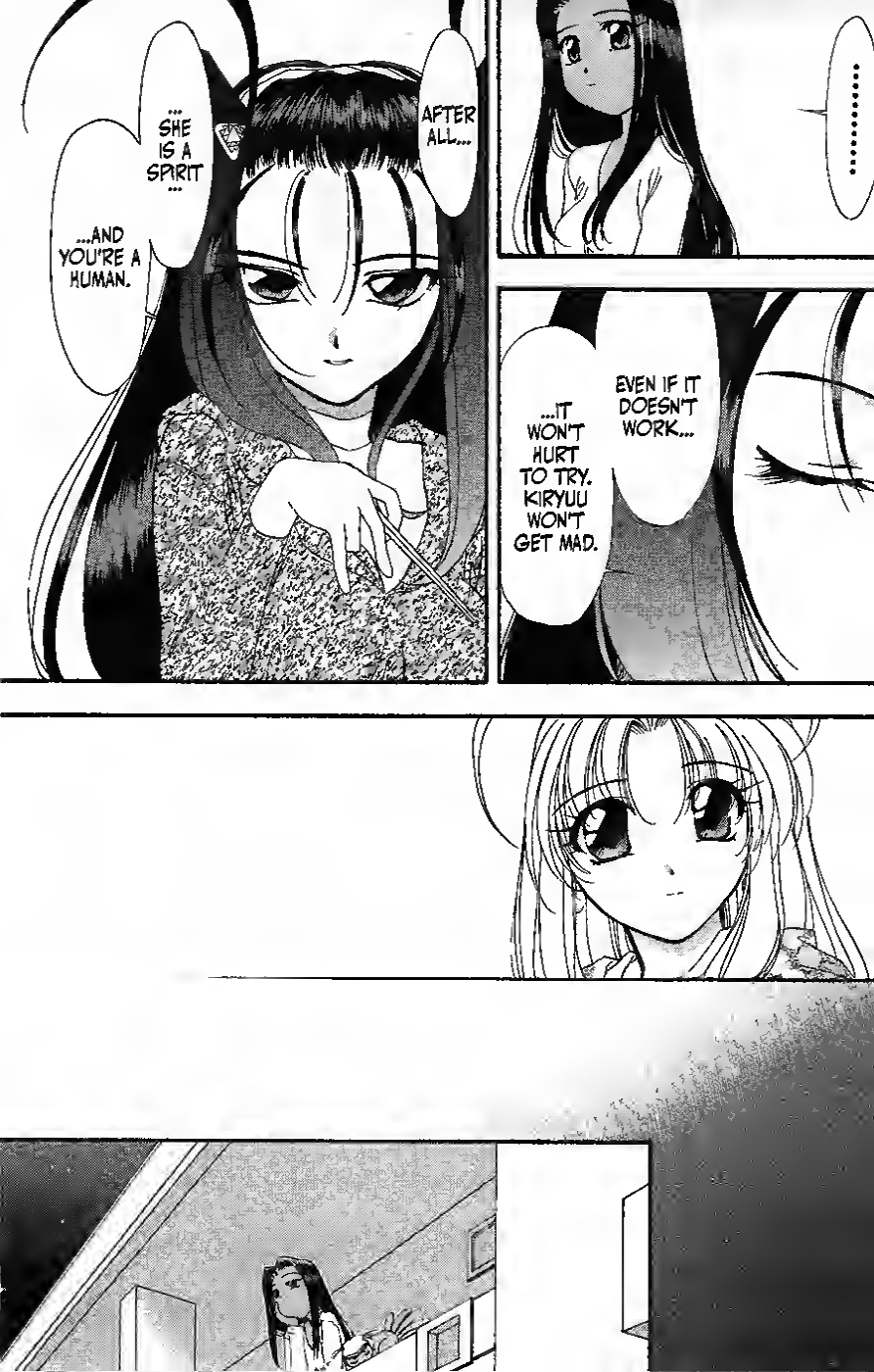
I'M HOME.
ÖH?
ちょ... ＩＯ
KIRYU.
OH...
すいっ
...ＩＯ

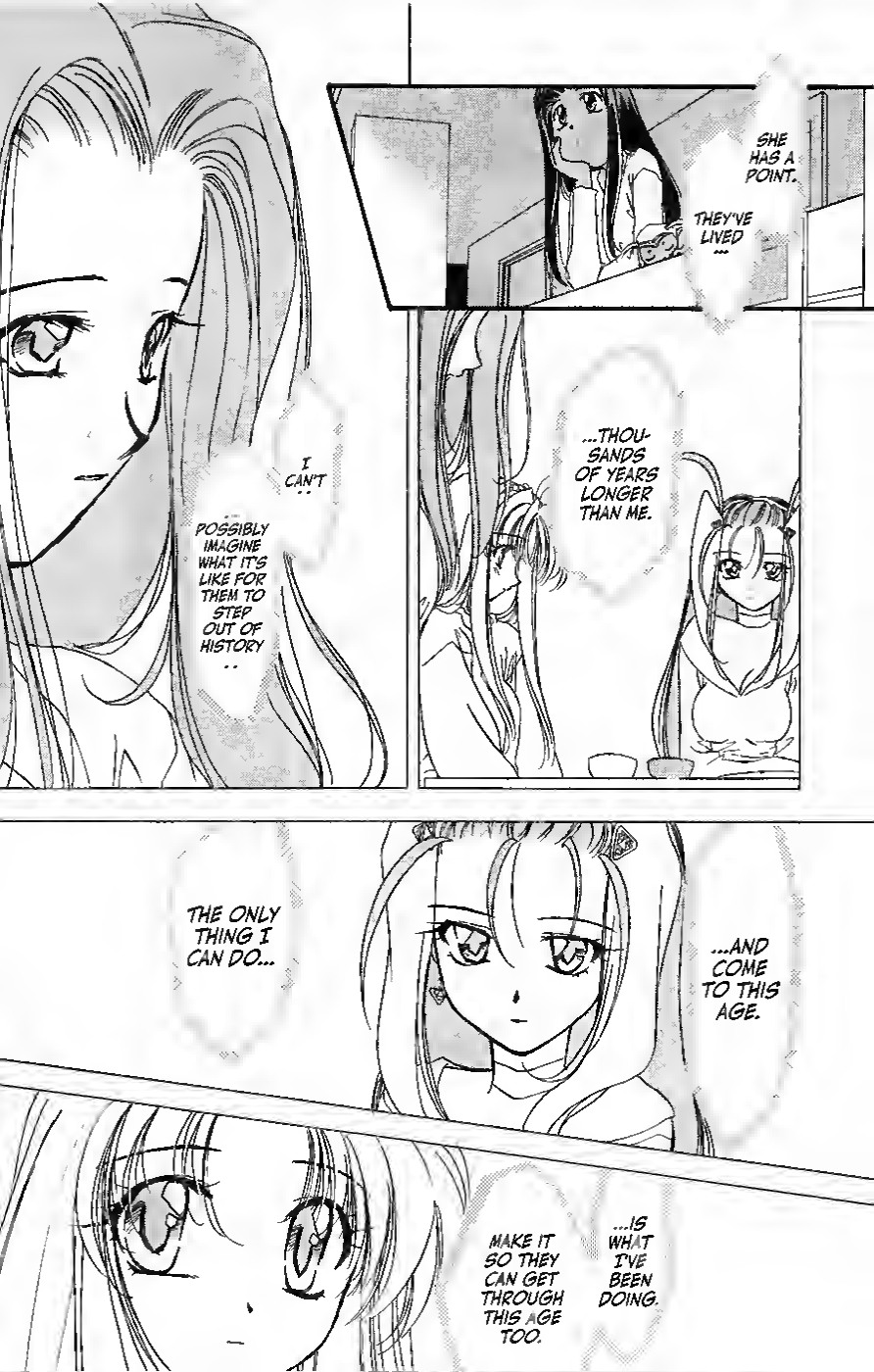

URGH!!
W--
WAS THAT A CHAL-LENGE?
WAS ABOUT TO WALK THROUGH.
...
...IT WASN'T, WAS IT?
THE SOFA AND PLANT DON'T MAKE ANY SENSE

MISS KIR-YUU.
I BOUGHT SOME BEEF ON THE WAY HOME. IS BEEF STEW OKAY FOR DINNER?
OH!
CAN I GET OUT NOW?
BEEF STEW, EH? THAT SOUNDS GOOD.
しら
パタン
しゅ〜ん
WOW...

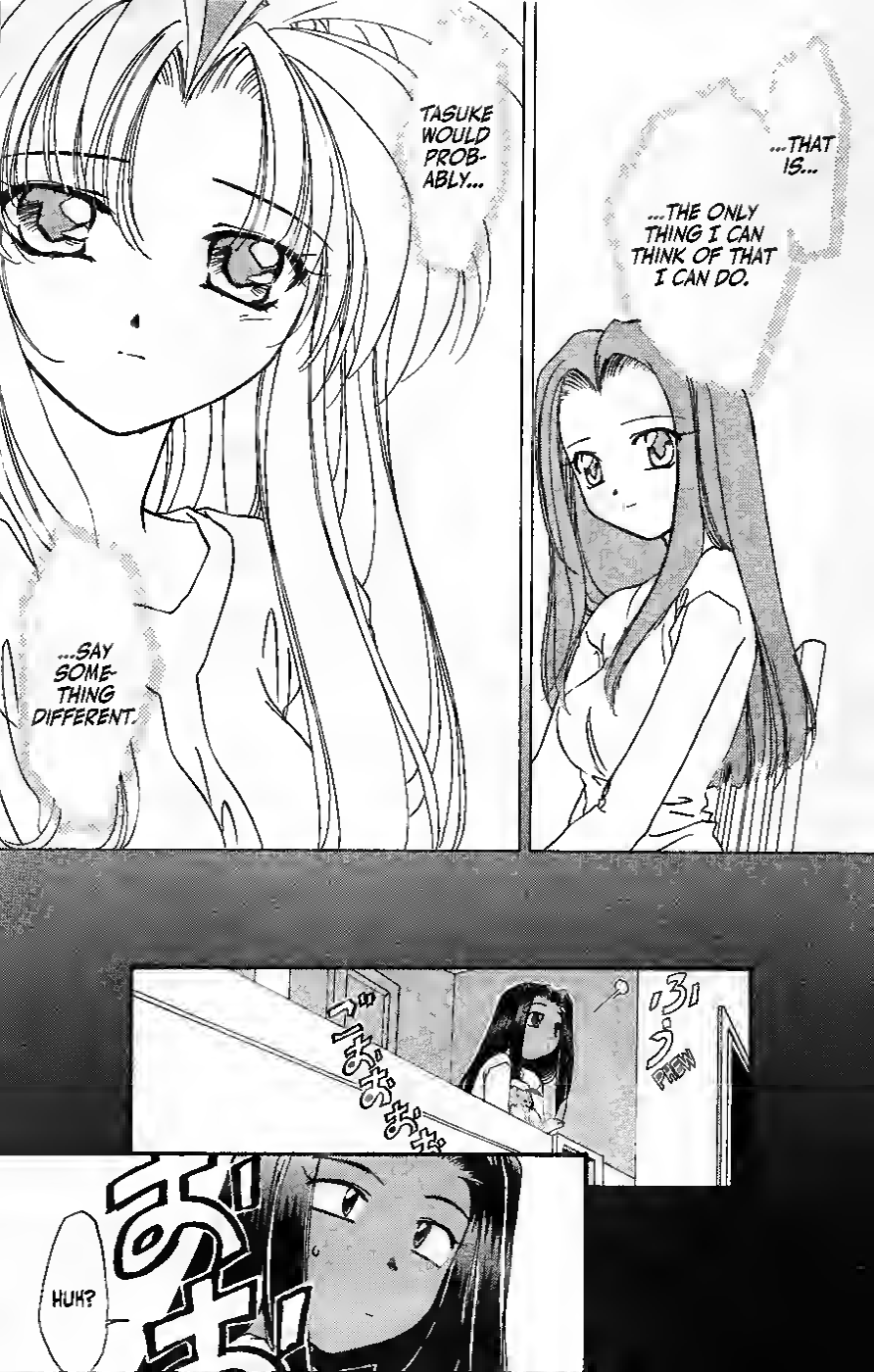

THANK YOU FOR DINNER.
ふう…
……
REAL-LY!!
DOES HE ALWAYS HAVE TO BE SO SPINE-LESS?!
IF YOU HAVE SOME-THING TO SAY, JUST SAY IT!!
……
SOME-THING TO SAY?


IF SOMETHING'S BOTHERING YOU...
...SHOULDN'T YOU JUST SAY SO?
TO MASTER TAA...
SIS SAYS THAT, BUT SHE DOESN'T DO IT EITHER.
WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU EXPECT OF SIBLINGS?
...AND TO KIRYUU.
"I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOU ANYMORE."
I THINK THE ONLY ONE WHO BELIEVED THAT WAS KIRYUU.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY THINGS TO PUSH HER AWAY.
YOU, OF ALL PEOPLE, SHOULD KNOW WHAT TO SAY TO CHEER SOMEONE UP, RIGHT?


.....
AFTER ALL...
...SHE IS A SPIRIT...
...AND YOU'RE A HUMAN.
EVEN IF IT DOESN'T WORK...
...IT WON'T HURT TO TRY. KIRYUU WON'T GET MAD.


SHE HAS A POINT.
THEY'VE LIVED ...
...THOUSANDS OF YEARS LONGER THAN ME.
I CAN'T ..
POSSIBLY IMAGINE WHAT IT'S LIKE FOR THEM TO STEP OUT OF HISTORY ..
THE ONLY THING I CAN DO...
...AND COME TO THIS AGE.
...IS WHAT I'VE BEEN DOING.
MAKE IT SO THEY CAN GET THROUGH THIS AGE TOO.

DO YOU THINK I'M WRONG?
THAT'S WHY I FIGURED IF KIRYUU'S ALWAYS BEEN DISLIKED...
...IT MIGHT BE EASIER FOR HER IF SHE'S DISLIKED HERE TOO.
YOU SEE, KOKA.
YEAH, I GUESS YOU WOULD-N'T KNOW.
GWEEE.
IT'S JUST THAT...


TASUKE WOULD PROBABLY...
...SAY SOMETHING DIFFERENT.
...THAT IS...
...THE ONLY THING I CAN THINK OF THAT I CAN DO.
PHEW
HUH?

HERE.
!!
ヒョイッ
KI...
RYUUU
...

.....
WOOO I MISS THE FLOWERS :'(
EEEEK! THE BANGS...!!
MUNO-PAI TSUKU-GAOKA MIDDLE SCHOOL
ACTUALLY, SHE'S BEEN ACTING DIFFERENT SINCE YESTER-DAY.
...BUT THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER SEEN HER LOSE IT.
SO THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SHE SNAPS
I'VE KNOWN KIRYUU FOR A LONG TIME...
SO ARE YOU.
USUALLY, YOU'D TRY TO STOP HER...

T-TUU?S?
RUUAN'S SERIOUSLY SURPRISED.
I'M SORRY... MISS NANA.
I FINALLY CAUGHT UP TO YOU!!

DON'T YOU RUN AWAY!!
.....
IF YOU WANNA SAY SOMETHING, JUST SAY IT!!
WHAT IN THE WORLD IS WRONG WITH YOU?!!
DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE TO ACT OUT LIKE THIS TO GET ATTENTION?!
DO YOU THINK THIS IS GOING TO MAKE EVERYONE SUDDENLY ASK YOU WHAT'S WRONG?!
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING ME!!
SUCH A PAIN!!

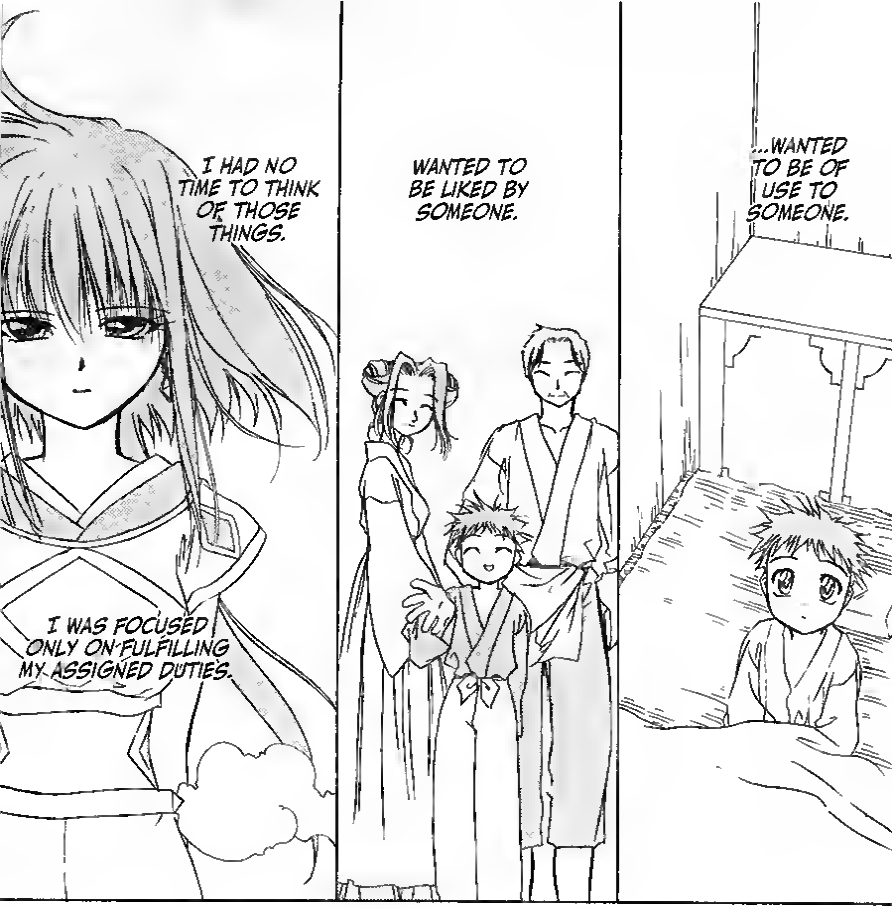
はぁ
SIGH
IF YOU'RE GOING TO THROW A TEMPER TANTRUM ...
...THEN AT LEAST DON'T NEGLECT YOUR DUTIES!

TASUKE NEEDS YOU!
SO YOU CAN'T JUST PULL STUNTS LIKE THIS! YOU HAVE OBLIGATIONS HERE!!
"WE DON'T NEED SOMEONE LIKE YOU."

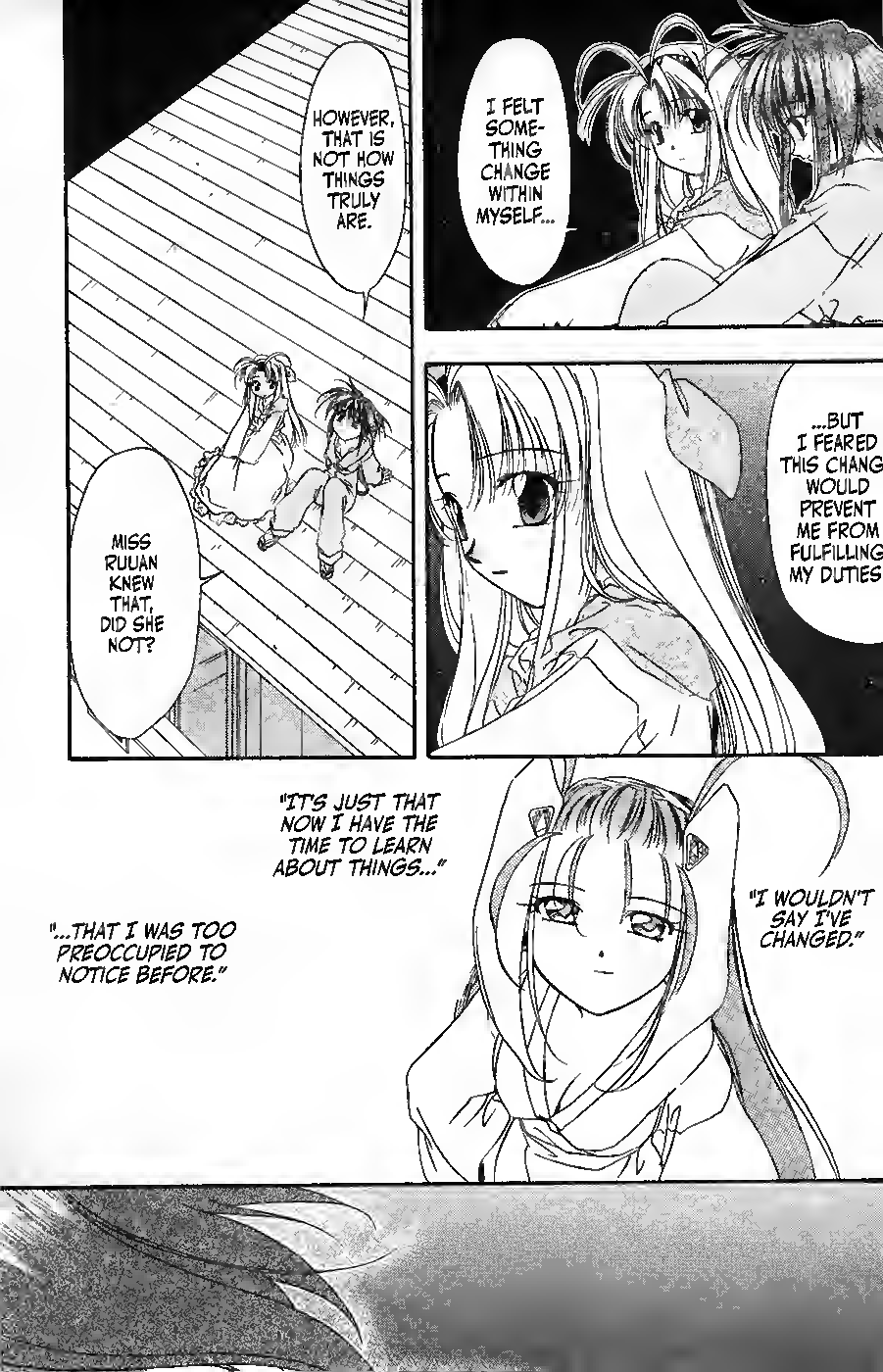
IF ALL YOU'RE GONNA DO IS ACT OUT, THEN YOU HAVE NO REASON TO BE HERE, RIGHT?!
ARE YOU PLANNING ON LEAVING WITHOUT FULFILLING YOUR DUTY?!!
"YOU SHOULD JUST GO ON BACK WHERE YOU CAME FROM."
SINCE YOU'VE COME ALL THIS WAY...
I'M TELLING YOU TO DO YOUR JOB AND DO IT WELL!!

"WHY HAVE YOU COME TO MY CHILD?"
WHY DON'T YOU GET IT?!!
I ONLY SAID THAT BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WOULD HELP YOU.
NOW YOU'RE MAKING IT LOOK LIKE I TRIED TO HURT YOU!
HEY! ARE YOU LISTENING?!

...SINCE I...
IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME...

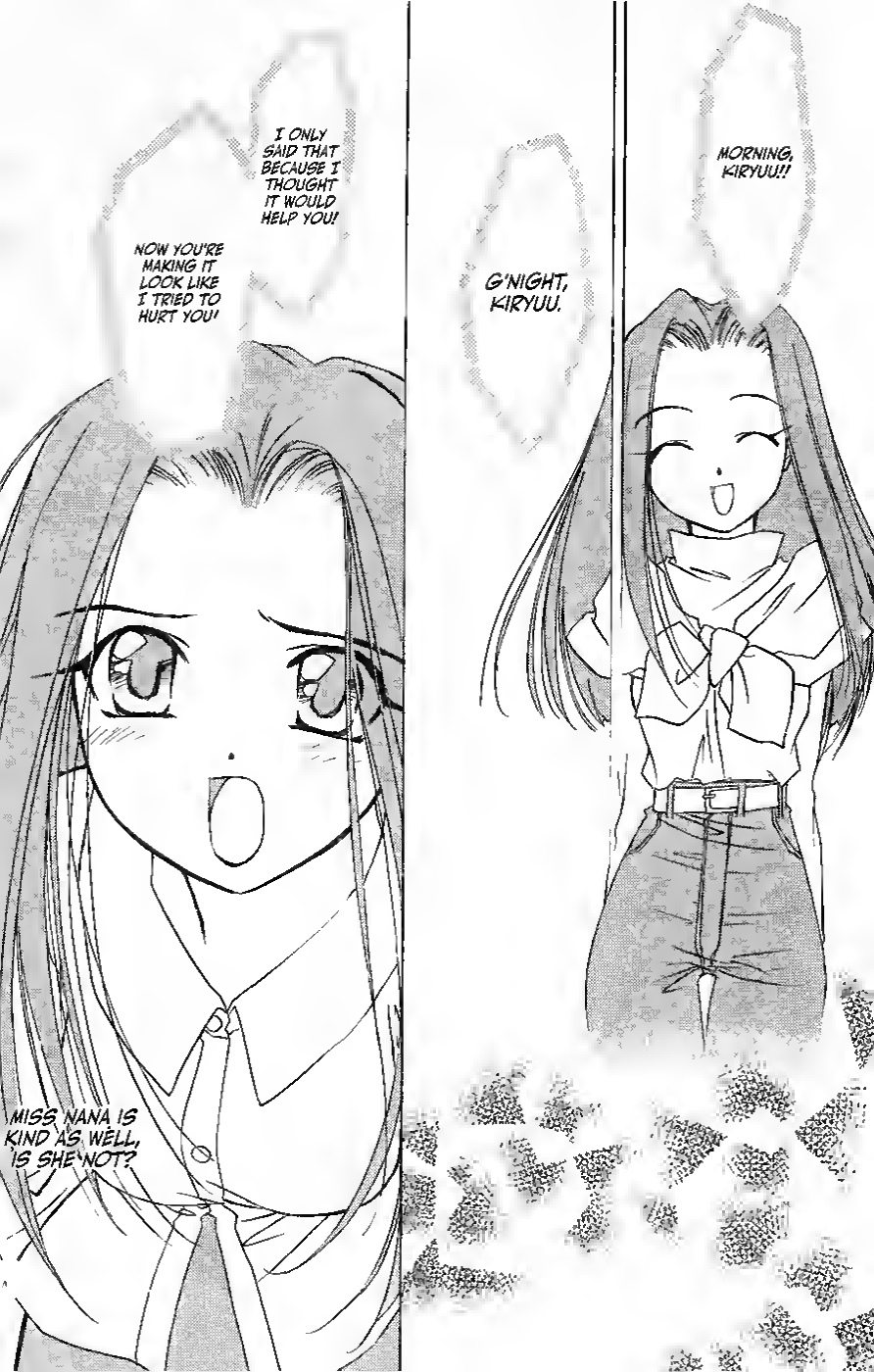

I HAD NO TIME TO THINK OF THOSE THINGS.
I WAS FOCUSED ONLY ON FULFILLING MY ASSIGNED DUTIES.
WANTED TO BE LIKED BY SOMEONE.
...WANTED TO BE OF USE TO SOMEONE.

I FEEL I UNDERSTAND WHAT MISS RUUAN WAS SAYING--A LITTLE.

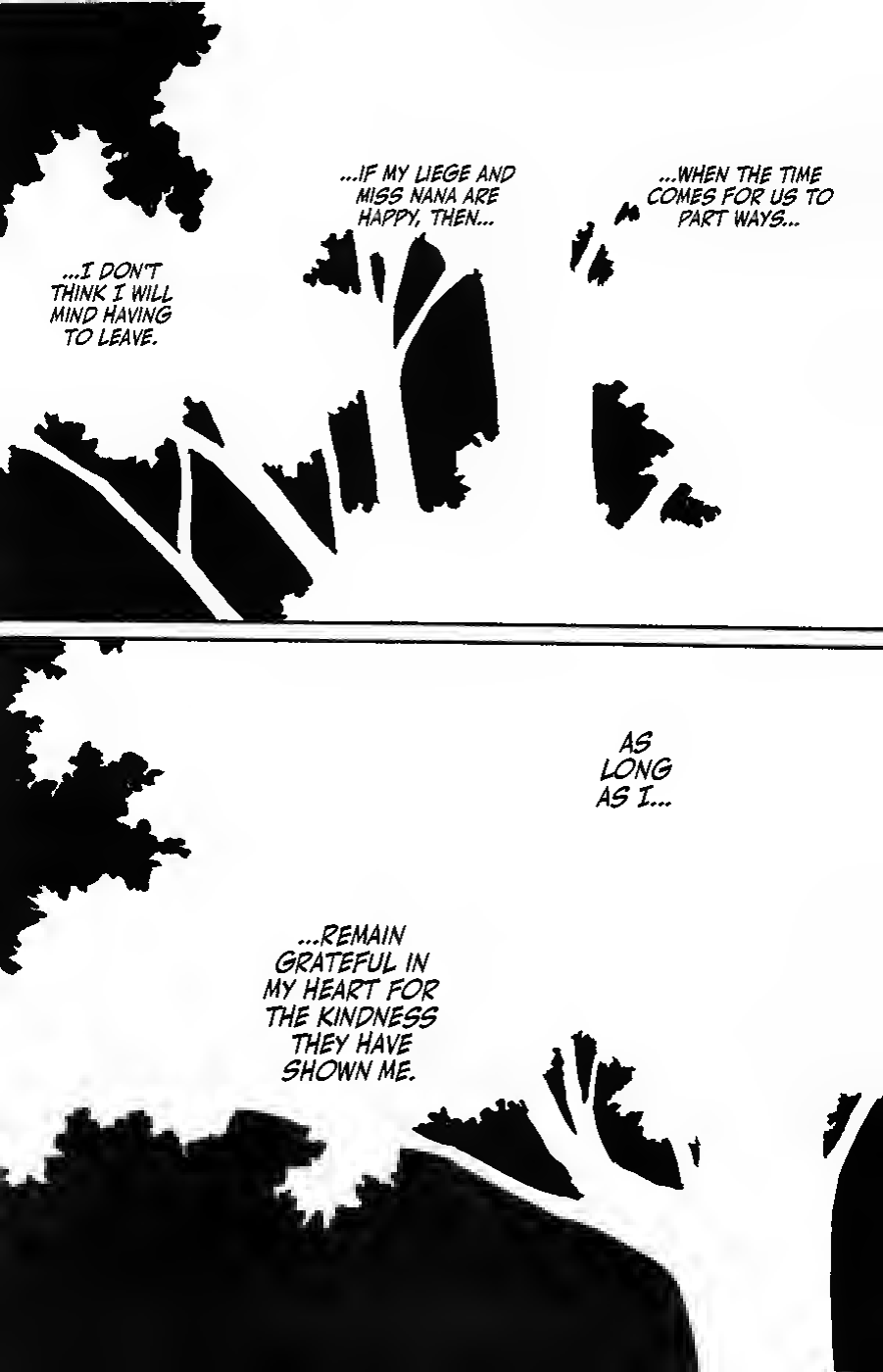

I FELT SOME-THING CHANGE WITHIN MYSELF...
HOWEVER, THAT IS NOT HOW THINGS TRULY ARE.
...BUT I FEARED THIS CHANG WOULD PREVENT ME FROM FULFILLING MY DUTIES
MISS RUUAN KNEW THAT, DID SHE NOT?
"I WOULDN'T SAY I'VE CHANGED."
"IT'S JUST THAT NOW I HAVE THE TIME TO LEARN ABOUT THINGS..."
"...THAT I WAS TOO PREOCCUPIED TO NOTICE BEFORE."

IT IS PROBABLY FINE...
..TO FIND SOMETHING THAT'S MORE IMPOR-TANT THAN AVOIDING PAIN, LIKE...
...WANTING TO BE OF USE TO SOME-ONE...
...OR WANTING TO BE LIKED BY SOMEONE.
IT IS STILL POSSIBLE TO FULFILL YOUR DUTIES...
...AND THINK SUCH THOUGHTS.
IT IS SIMPLY THAT THIS WORLD HAS ALLOWED US...
...TO LEARN THIS.

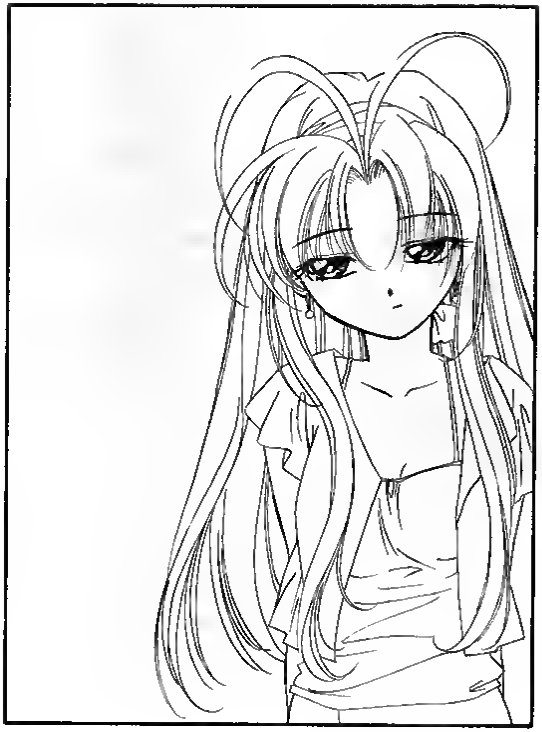
すぐ。
I'M READY. LET'S DO IT!!
THOSE BANNAN CHITEN CHAL-LENGES OR WHAT-EVER..
THEN IT'S JUST A WASTED EFFORT. AFTER ALL, THIS IS A CHANCE TO GROW.
INSTEAD OF RESENTING THE CHAL-LENGES, IT'S MORE EFFECTIVE FOR BOTH OF US...
...IF WE WORK TOGETHER, RIGHT?
MY LIEGE IS KIND, IS HE NOT?


MORNING, KIRYUU!!
G'NIGHT, KIRYUU.
I ONLY SAID THAT BECAUSE I THOUGHT IT WOULD HELP YOU!
NOW YOU'RE MAKING IT LOOK LIKE I TRIED TO HURT YOU!
MISS NANA IS KIND AS WELL, IS SHE NOT?

...THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN KIND TO ME.
...TO REPAY...
...DO WHAT I CAN DO...
HERE, I SHALL ...
I HAVE DECIDED TO BELIEVE...
...THAT MY POWERS WILL BE OF USE TO THESE PEOPLE.
SOMEDAY...
...WORRY ABOUT CHANGING AND SUCH.
AND SO I WILL NO LONGER ...


...I DON'T THINK I WILL MIND HAVING TO LEAVE.
...IF MY LIEGE AND MISS NANA ARE HAPPY, THEN...
...WHEN THE TIME COMES FOR US TO PART WAYS...
AS LONG AS I...
...REMAIN GRATEFUL IN MY HEART FOR THE KINDNESS THEY HAVE SHOWN ME.

CHAPTER 60
SHAORIN OF MIYAUCHI SHRINE (PART 1)

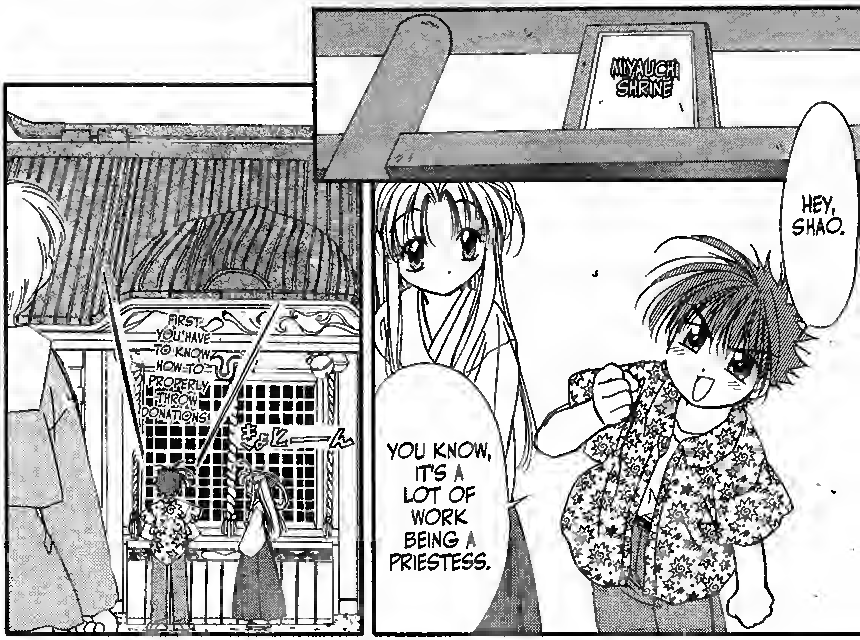


SHAAAO!! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, OF ALL PLACES?!
AT THE MIYAUCHI SHRINE!!
HI, MISS SHOUKO.
I'M A PRIESTESS. ♡
PRIEST-ESS...
WELL, MY MOTHER HAD TO GO TO HER PARENTS'...
...AND HAVING MISS SHAORIN HERE HAS BEEN SO HELP-FUL.
SHE SAYS
PLUS SHE'S GOING TO SPEND THE NIGHT HERE WHILE SHE'S HELP-ING..
WITH SHAORIN

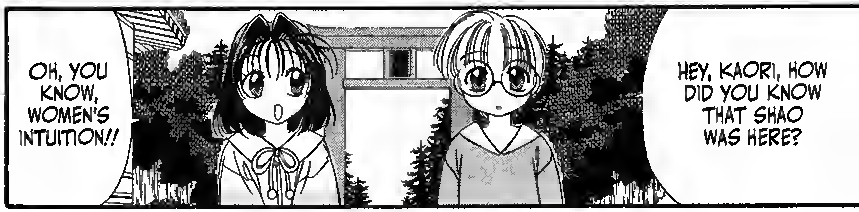
HUFF
HEY! WHY THE HECK...
...IS SHAO A PRIEST-ESS?!!!
WHAT? SHAO'S A PRIEST-ESS?
WHEEE!
WHEEE!
WHEN? WHERE?!!!
何言ってんだよ
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
SHAO'S A PRIEST-ESS?!
ぱっ
ポテ…
T-TAKASHI, YOU'RE GOING TO SHAKE HIM TO DEATH!
SHOO
LIKE, TODAY!!
AT THE MIYAUCHI SHRINE!!

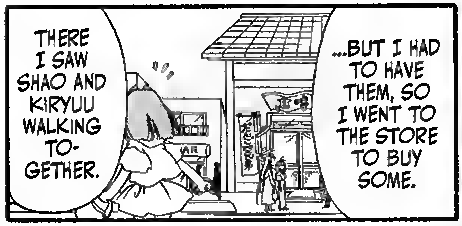
YOU'RE RIGHT. IT'S NOT.
THAT'S NOT IIIIT!!!
LIKE, GAAAH!!
NOT ALL CUTE GIRLS ARE PRIESTESSES, YOU KNOW.
HOW CAN YOU NOT KNOW?!
YOU DIDN'T KNOW
SHE'S, LIKE, SUPER-CUTE!!
WHEN YOU THINK OF A CUTE GIRL, YOU THINK PRIESTESS!!
1 PRIESTESS FETISH

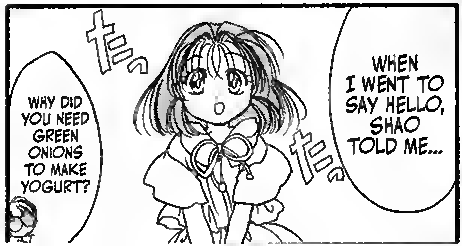
IF TASUKE'S NOT GOING TO DEAL WITH THIS, THEN I WILL!!
I'M GOING TO GET SHAO BACK!!
SHE'S IN THE LAIR OF THE BEAST! I MUST SAVE HER!
ガチャン
BUT WE MADE AN IGLOO AND STUFF THERE.
WELL, IT WASN'T QUITE AN IGLOO
JEEZ, THEY'RE SO HYPER.
DON'T THEY EVER CHILL OUT?
.....
SHAO'S AT IZUMO'S PLACE...



NOTE: IN JAPAN, YOU TOSS COINS INTO THE DONATION BOX, SHAKE A ROPE THAT RINGS BIG RATTLING BELLS, CLAP YOUR HANDS, AND PRAY.

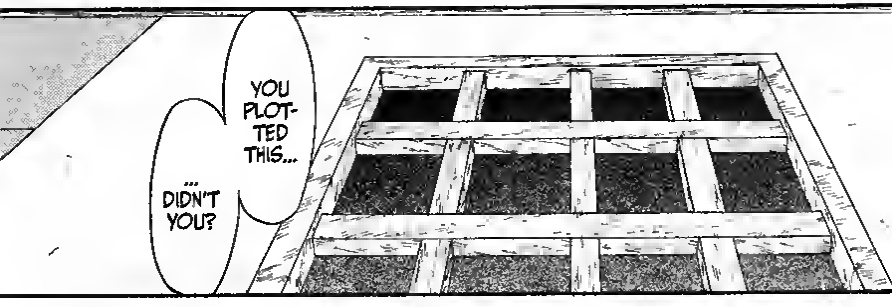






I'M GOING TO BE A PRIESTESS AT MR. IZUMO'S SHRINE!
A PRIEST-ESS?
THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID. SO I HAD TO SEE FOR MYSELF...
GETTING THE THINGS SHE NEEDS TO STAY OVER
AND SEE? HERE SHE IS.
THAT'S INTUITION? ANYWAY, THE GREEN ONIONS?
THIS IS HOW YOU DO IT, OOP?
I HAVE TO GO CONSOLE TASUKE. I'LL SEE OU LATER! ♡
THAT'S HOW IT IS! SO SINCE I GAVE YOU GUYS THE SCOOP, YOU CAN TREAT ME TO PIZZA LATER, OKEY-DOKE? ♡
TELL TAKASHI THAT TOO, OKAY?!
I DON'T FORGET TO TELL TAKASHI!

TRA LA
LA

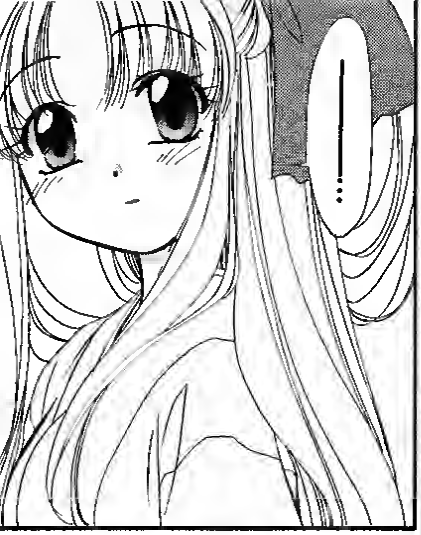

YOU PLOT-TED THIS...
...DIDN'T YOU?

OH, YOU'RE STILL SUSPICIOUS OF ME?
.....
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU MAKE IT SOUND SO SHADY.
WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT?
...ASKING HER TO COME HELP BECAUSE HER SISTER, NIECE, AND AUNT'S DUE DATES WERE COMING UP SOONER THAN EXPECTED.
...MY MOTHER GOT A CALL FROM HER PARENTS' HOME...
SHAO, EVERYONE KNOWS THAT PRIESTESSES
STRICT?
IT WAS JUST YESTER-DAY THAT...
HEH HEH ...
WHAT HE'S REALLY THINKING...
WHEN SHAO SAID SHE'D HELP, IT WAS A GODSEND.
SO HE SAYS...
MOVING ON... WHERE'S YOH? I COME TO SEE HIM AND HE'S NOT HERE?!
RUNNING A SHRINE IS A LOT OF WORK FOR ONE PERSON.

NO..I'M TELLING YOU THE TRUTH
...WHATEVER YOU SAY.
NOT TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT, BUT..
WELL...
WHAT ARE YOU...
...DOING HERE?
THAT'S WHAT I WAS GOING TO ASK YOU, MISS RUJIAN. WHAT HAS HAPPENED?
IS IT ALL RIGHT FOR YOU TO LEAVE MY LIEGE ALONE?

MAYBE YOU...
...PLOTTED THIS.
.....
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
HUMPH.
I WONDER.

PROCESSOR OVERLOAD
NNGH...
A PRIEST-ESS WITH A BAMBOO BROOM.
IT'S TOO MUCH! I CAN'T TAKE THIS
TAKASHI...
MR. TAKA-SHI!
I FOUND A BROOM. ♡
FUFF
FUFF
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU MAKING SHAO DO?!!

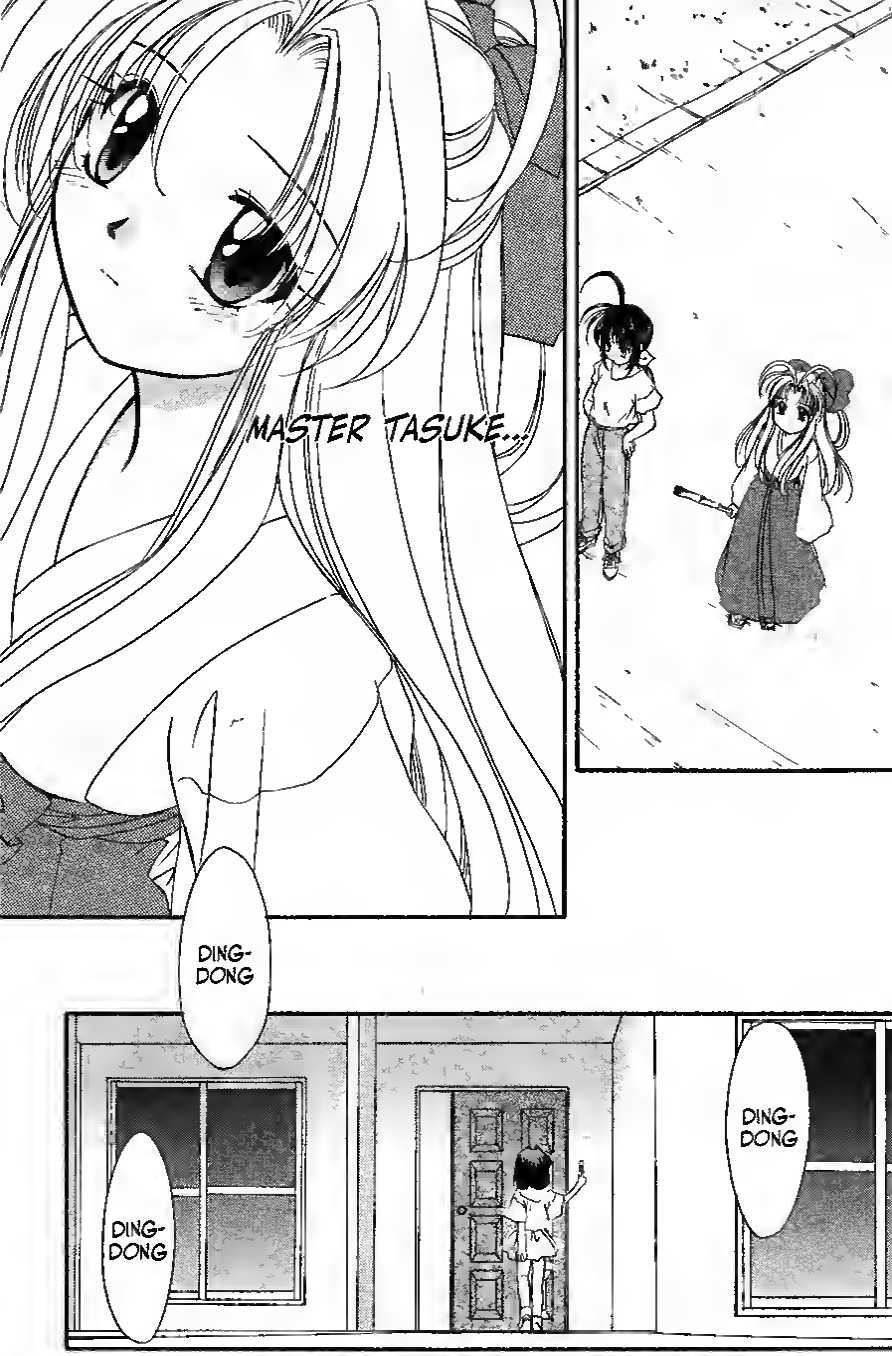

!!!

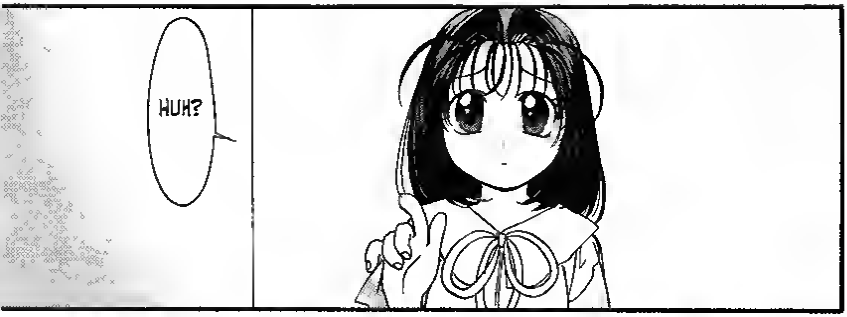
SHOUKO!!

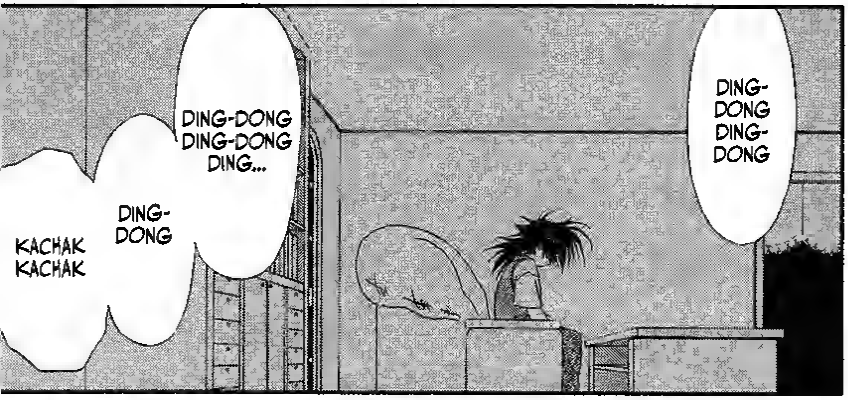
I'M JUST TEACHING HER HOW TO THROW DONATIONS.
THINGS A PRIESTESS SHOULD KNOW AND STUFF...
MMHMM...

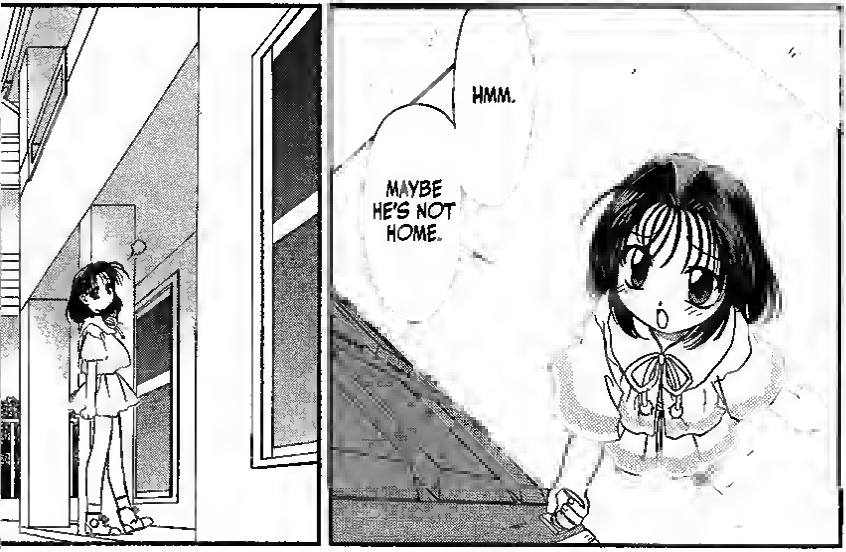
IT WAS AT THAT TIME THAT I REALIZED I HAD BEEN REDUCED TO THE BAD KID CLICHÉ WITH KOICHIROU AS MY WINGMAN.
TAKASHI

W-WELL... READY TO GO, KOICHIROU? IT'S ALREADY LATE AND...
HERE, I BROUGHT YOU THE EGGPLANTS AND MISO AND ALL THAT.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

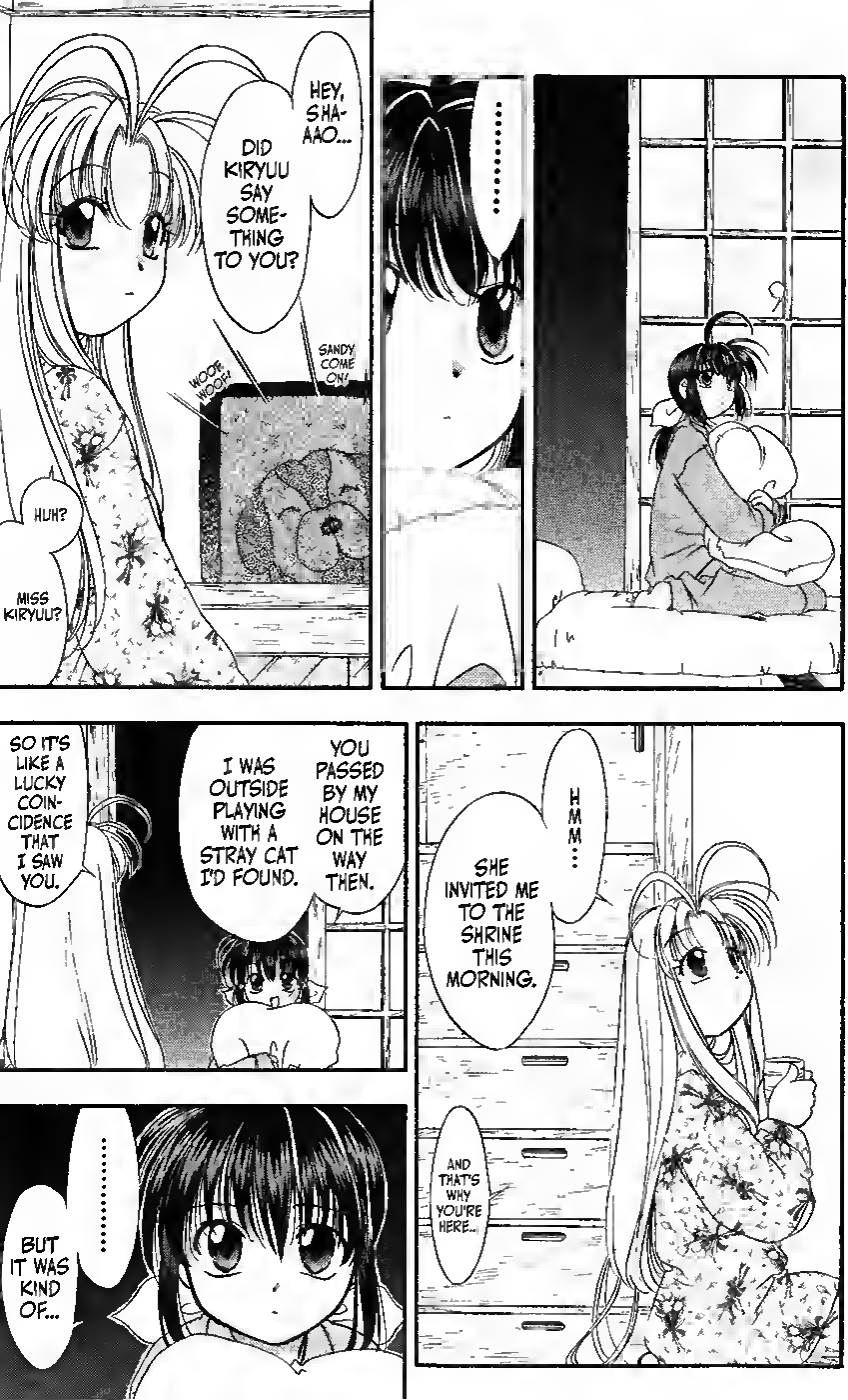

MASTER TASUKE...
DING-DONG
DING-DONG
DING-DONG


HUH?


DING-DONG DING-DONG DING...
DING-DONG
KACHAK KACHAK
DING-DONG DING-DONG


HMM.
MAYBE HE'S NOT HOME.

HEY, SHAO, HOW LONG ARE YOU PLANNING ON STAYING HERE?
HMM ...?
I GUESS UNTIL MR. IZUMO'S MOTHER RETURNS...
I SEE!
OKAY, I'LL STAY 'TIL THEN TOO.
BECAUSE WE DON'T KNOW WHAT A CERTAIN SOME-ONE MIGHT DO IF YOU'RE HERE ALONE.
RIII-GHT ?
.....

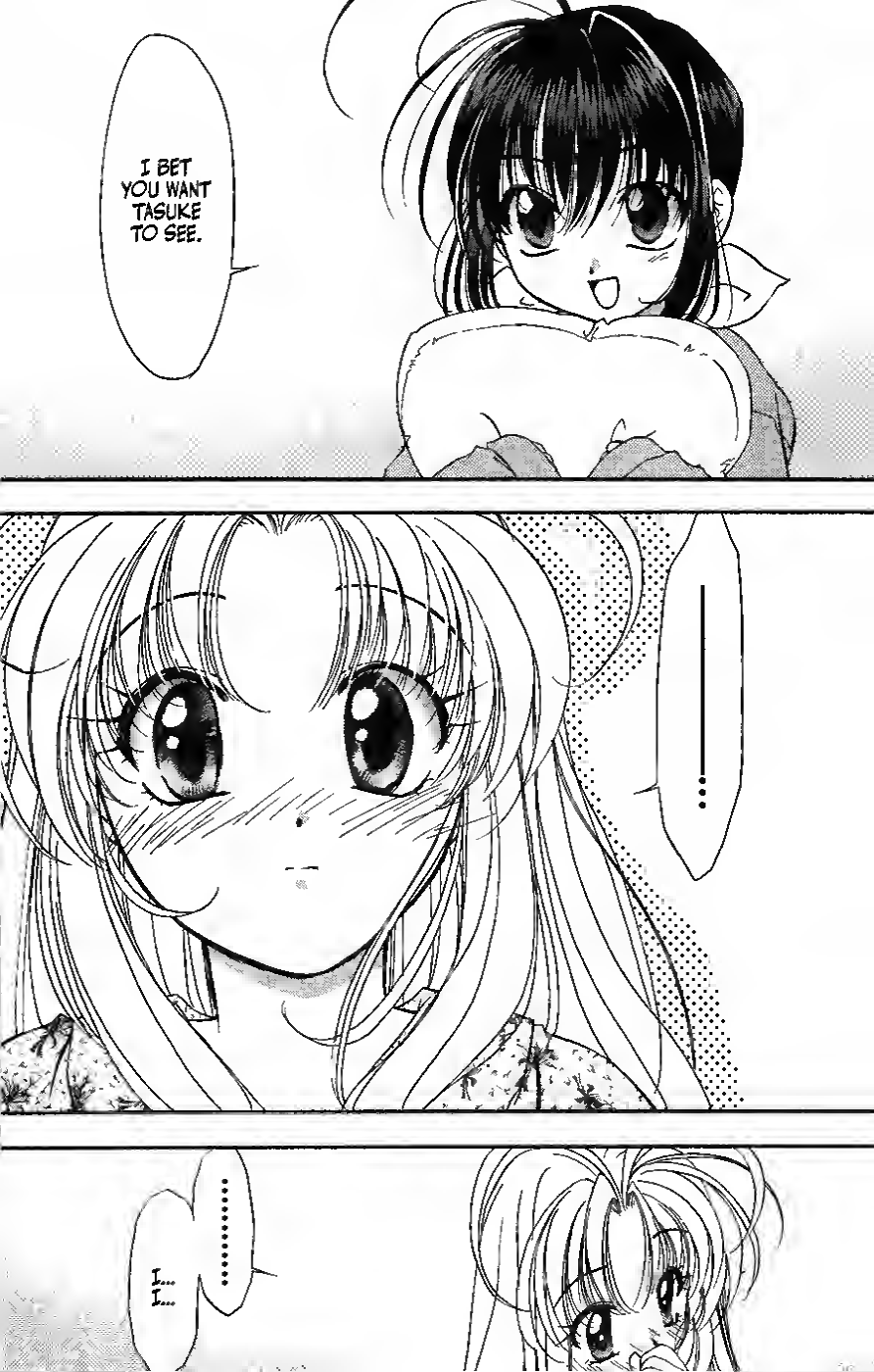

HEY, SHA-AAO...
DID KIRYUU SAY SOME-THING TO YOU?
SANDY, COME ON!
WOOF WOOF!
HUH?
MISS KIRYUU?
.....
HMM...
SHE INVITED ME TO THE SHRINE THIS MORNING.
AND THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HERE...
YOU PASSED BY MY HOUSE ON THE WAY THEN.
I WAS OUTSIDE PLAYING WITH A STRAY CAT I'D FOUND.
SO IT'S LIKE A LUCKY COIN-CIDENCE THAT I SAW YOU.
.....
BUT IT WAS KIND OF...

AND THEN LATER, WHEN I CAME AFTER YOU...
...YOU WERE ALREADY A PRIEST-ESS.

...I DON'T KNOW, SOME-THING FELT FUNNY ABOUT IT.
I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT THOUGH.

WELL ...
IT DOES REALLY FIT YOU. ♡

FIT


I BET YOU WANT TASUKE TO SEE.
.....
.....
I...
I...

...JUST...
...THOUGHT..
...IT'D BE NICE IF MASTER TASUKE...
...CAME HERE FOR ME.
.....

SHAO DIDN'T COME TO SCHOOL TODAY, DID SHE?
I WAS SO THOUGHTLESS!! I-FORGOT!! THAT'S WHY!
WHOOOOOO
OOH...
OOH, IT'S MY FAULT! I WAS BAAAD!!
NOO!
SLAM
IT'S BECAUSE I DIDN'T RESCUE SHAO FROM THE BEAST'S LAIR!!
HOW COULD YOU FORGET SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

LET'S WALK HOME TO-GETHER ...
...TASUKE.
.....
NOT TODAY. SORRY.
OH. ♡
WHAT?!! AAAAAHHH!
T-TAKA

!
ARE YOU COOL WITH ALL THIS?

SHAO'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
I'M STAYING AT THE SHRINE WITH HER.
.....
...THANKS, SHOUKO.

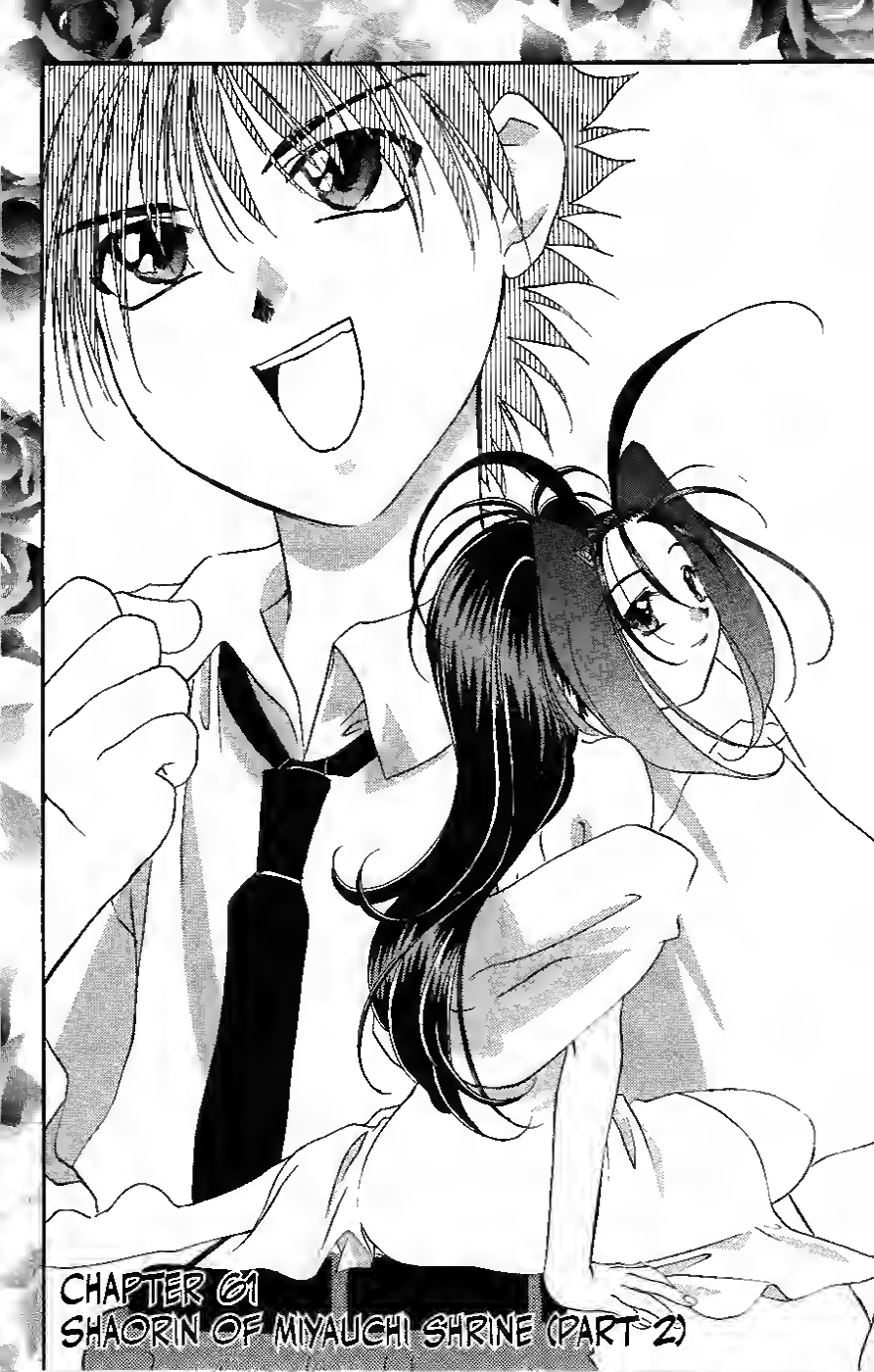
YOU SHOULD-N'T...
...WORRY ABOUT THINGS TOO MUCH.
YOU'RE ONLY 14.
SO YOU'RE STILL A KID, RIGHT?
SOME THINGS YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT UNTIL YOU'RE OLDER.
.....

WELL, I THINK I'LL HEAD BACK.
I CAN'T LEAVE SHAO ALONE TOO LONG, YOU KNOW.

HUH...?
KIRYUU...?

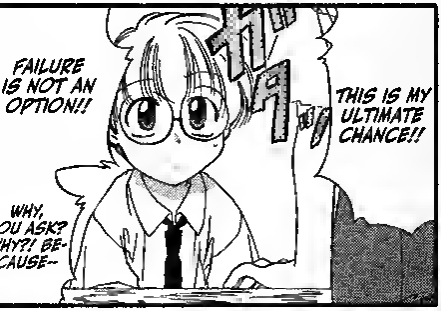
SHAO...

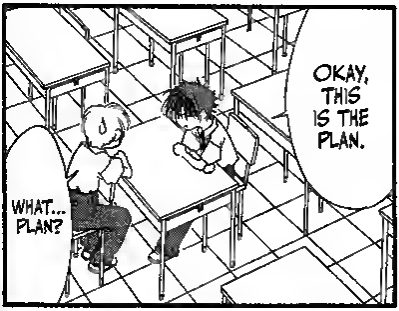
YOU KNOW THAT MISS SHAO...
...WILL NOT RETURN TO YOU...
...MR. TASU-KE.



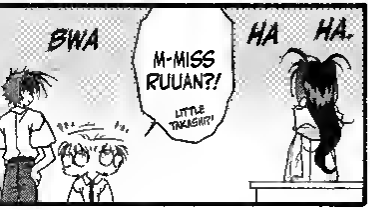
CHAPTER 61
SHAORIN OF MIYAUCHI SHRINE (PART 2)

OPERATION: RESCUE SHAO.

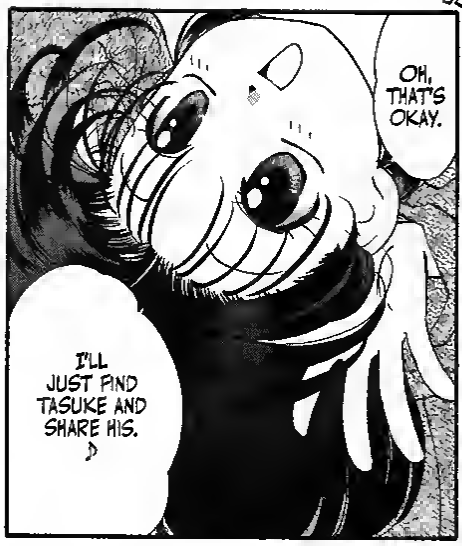

FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION!!
THIS IS MY ULTIMATE CHANCE!!
WHY, OU ASK? HY?! BE-CAUSE--

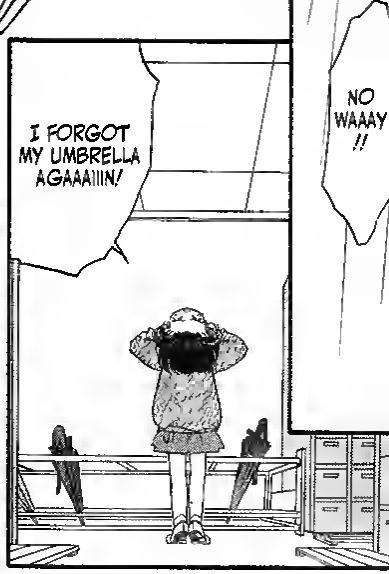

OKAY, THIS IS THE PLAN.
WHAT... PLAN?

HUMPH. MISS RUUAN.
TEE HEE. LITTLE TAKA-SHI.

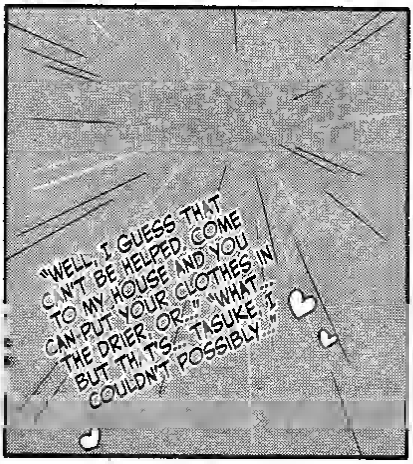

BWA
M-MISS RUUAN?!
LITTLE TAKASHI?!
HA HA.

BECAUSE YOU'RE SURROUND-ED BY A BUNCH OF IN-COMPETENT UNDERLINGS ...
...WHO CAN'T GET ANYTHING DONE. THAT'S WHY. ♡
OH...MISS RUUAN...


OH, THAT'S OKAY.
I'LL JUST FIND TASUKE AND SHARE HIS. ♪


I FORGOT MY UMBRELLA AGAAAIIIN!
NO WAAAY!!

AFTER ALL, THAT WAY, TASUKE'LL BE ALL...
TEE HEE! LET IT RAIN! I DON'T CARE IF I GET A LITTLE WET!


"WELL, I GUESS THAT C.N'T BE HELPED. COME TO MY HOUSE AND YOU CAN PUT YOUR CLOTHES IN THE DRIER. OR--" "WHAT...? BUT, TH, TS... TASUKE, I COULDN'T POSSIBLY--"

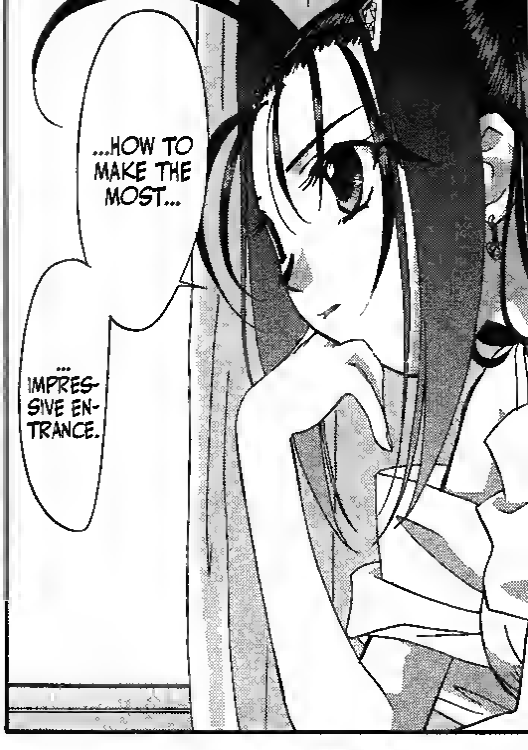
"TEE HEE. I FORGOT MY UMBRELLA (AGAIN)."
"WHAT'S WRONG? YOU'RE SOAKED!!"

MISS SHAO HAS GROWN TIRED OF YOU.
YOU KNOW THAT MISS SHAO...
...WILL NOT RE-TURN TO YOU.
"OH NOOO REALLY TASUKE, YOU'RE SO...
SHE DISLIKES YOU.
WHY DON'T YOU...

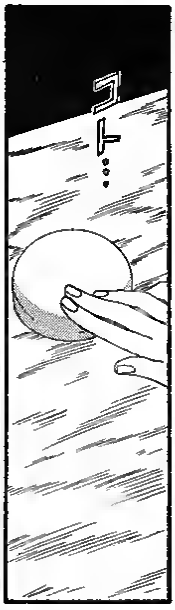
...MR. TASUKE?
...GIVE UP...
OH... TASUKE!!
.....?

WAIT FOR MEEE!
GET IT?
OBJECTIVELY SPEAKING, WHAT SHE NEEDS MOST IS SOMEONE TO LEND HER A HAND IN THE MIDST OF ALL THIS COMMOTION.
OBJECTIVELY SPEAKING...
THAT SO?
BUT THE REAL ISSUE IS...

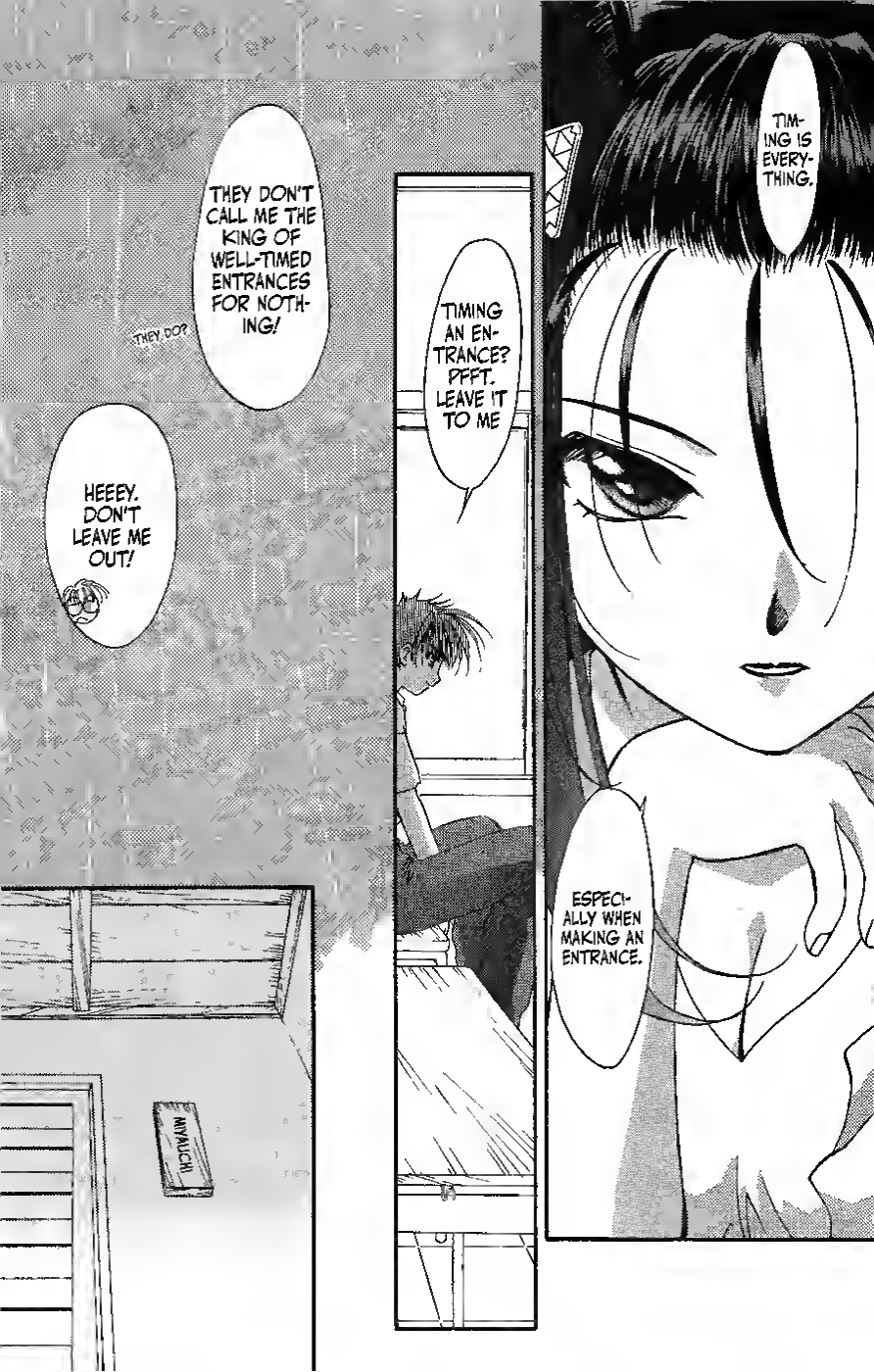
IS IT?
I... SEE. SO THAT'S IT.
WHY ARE YOU GUYS LOOKING AT EACH OTHER LIKE THAT?


...HOW TO MAKE THE MOST...
...IMPRESSIVE ENTRANCE.

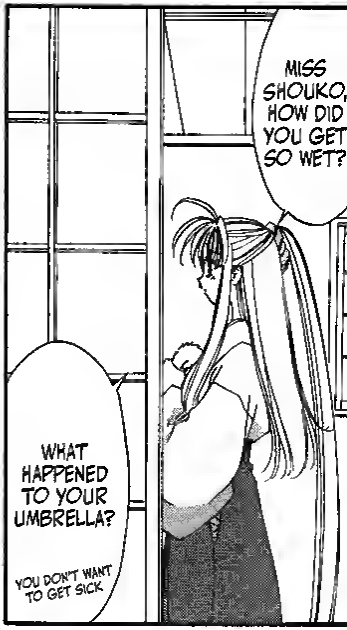
IS IT?!
HUH...SO THAT'S HOW IT IS.
GET IT? LOOK CAREFULLY, OKAY?


ゴト…

HA HA. IT'S FOR TIMES JUST LIKE THESE ...
...THAT I HAVE THIS.


TIM-
ING IS
EVERY-
THING.
ESPECI-
ALLY WHEN
MAKING AN
ENTRANCE.
TIMING
AN EN-
TRANCE?
PFFT.
LEAVE IT
TO ME
THEY DON'T
CALL ME THE
KING OF
WELL-TIMED
ENTRANCES
FOR NOTH-
ING!
-THEY DO?
HEEEY.
DON'T
LEAVE ME
OUT!
MIYAUCHI

OH YEAH... I THINK IT BLEW AWAY SOME-WHERE.
WOW. IT BLEW AWAY?


MISS SHOUKO, HOW DID YOU GET SO WET?
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR UMBRELLA?
YOU DON'T WANT TO GET SICK

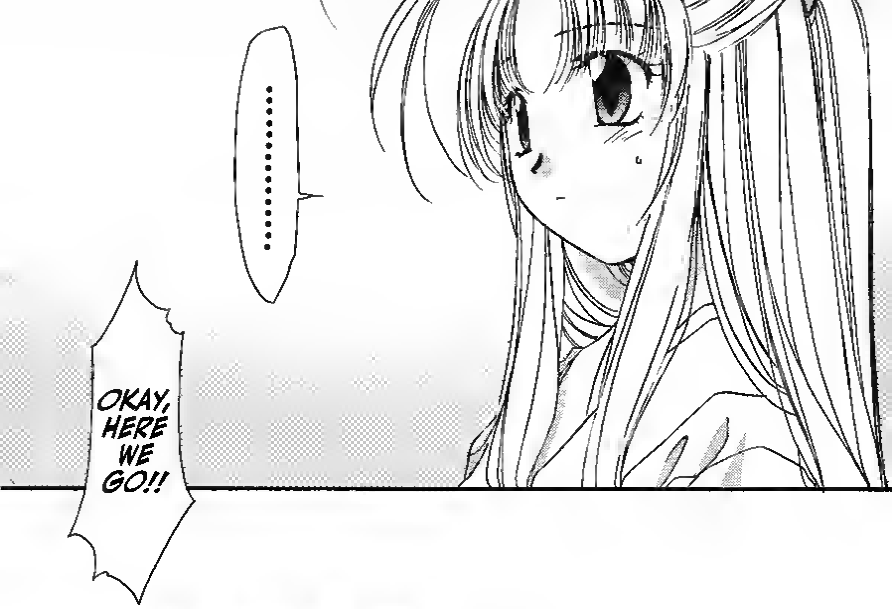
...WHY IS RISHU HERE?
ISN'T SHE USUAL-LY WITH TASUKE?

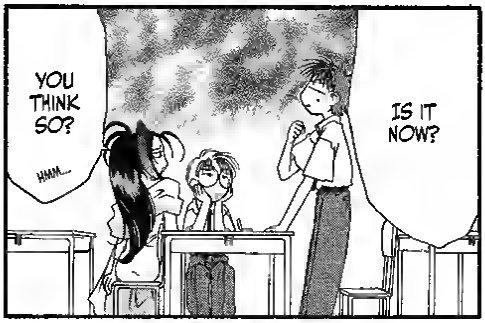
THE WIND MUST BE STRONG. I WONDER IF MASTER TASUKE IS ALL RIGHT?
THANKS, RISHU.
BUT ACTU-ALLY...

OH... UMM...
MISS KIRYUU TOLD ME TO AND...
KIRYUU... ...SAID WHAT?
THAT IT MUST BE HARD ON RISHU AND MASTER TASUKE TO BE TOGETHER ALL THE TIME...
...AND THAT THEY NEEDED A BREAK SO THEY WOULDN'T GET SICK OF EACH OTHER.
THAT'S WHY YOU BROUGHT RISHU OVER?
SHE SAID THIS WORLD IS SO PEACEFUL IT WOULDN'T BE A PROBLEM IF RISHU CAME WITH ME.
I THOUGHT MAYBE ...
...SHE WAS RIGHT.
.....

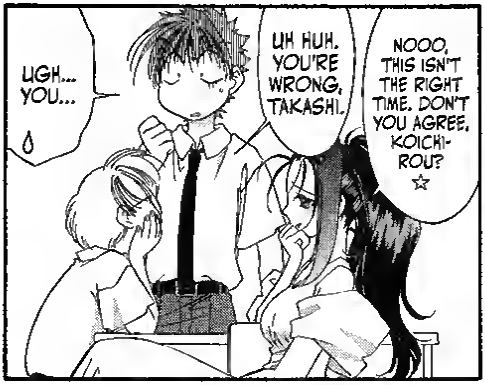
SHAO, YOU'RE SO WEIRD!
HUH?
WELL, LIKE, EVERY-ONE'S WEIRD.
BUT KIRY-UU'S THE WEIRD-EST!!
EVERY-THING IS SO FREAKIN WEIRD THESE DAYS!!
LIKE, WHAT WAS WITH YOU GUYS WALKING PAST MY HOUSE YESTER-DAY?!
WE HAVE TO PASS YOUR HOUSE TO GET HERE, MISS SHOUKO.
THAT'S TRUE, BUT THAT'S NOT IT!!
WHY DID YOU WALK BY?! DON'T YOU USUALLY FLY? YOU CAN BOTH FLY, CAN'T YOU?!!
BECAUSE MISS KIRYUU WANTED TO WALK...
SPARKING OF THE 50 CONVERSATION

AND WHAT ABOUT THE CAT?!
MY PARENTS KEEP CAT REPELLANT OUT ALL THE TIME BECAUSE THEY HATE CATS!! SO WHY, OF ALL THE CATS THAT STAYED AWAY, DID THIS ONE KITTY COME AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME, LIKE IT WAS PLANTED THERE OR SOMETHING?!!
THE CAT PROBABLY CAME TO SEE YOU, MISS SHOUKO.
BUT ...!!
AARGH!
YOU AREN'T LISTEN-ING!!
KIRYUU SET IT ALL UP! EVEN THIS IS PROBABLY A SETUP TOO!!
SHE'S PLANNING TO DO SOME-THING TO TASUKE!!
I'M GOING TO INVESTIGATE. JUST STAY HERE AND KEEP THE DOOR LOCKED! OKAY, SHAO?!
WHAT... UH...
SEE LIKE THIS!!
MAKESHIFT DOOR JAM!
YES...
SEE YA!!
BUT IF MASTER TASU-KE'S IN TROUBLE, I SHOULD...

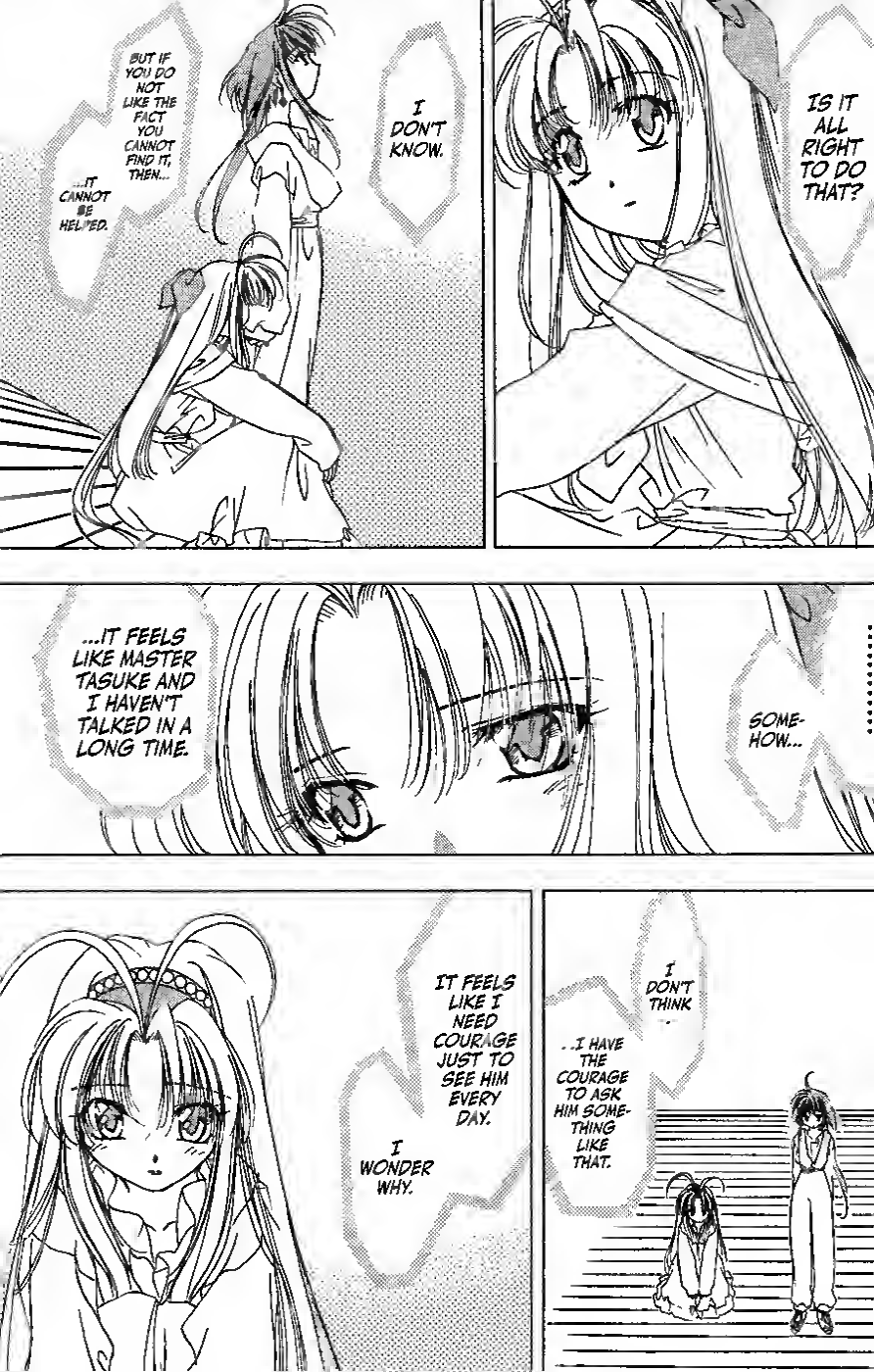

.....
OKAY, HERE WE GO!!

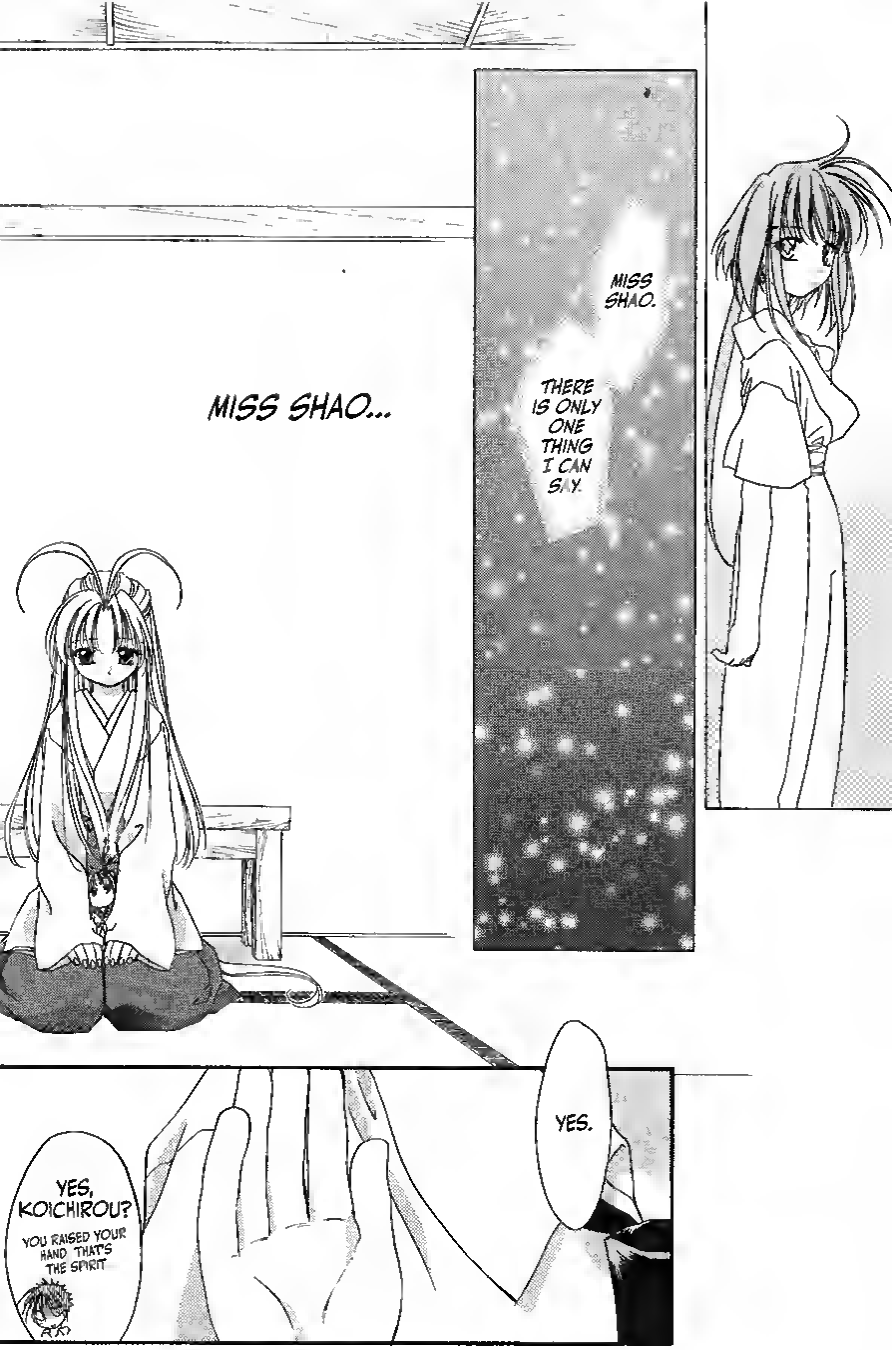

YOU THINK SO?
HMM...
IS IT NOW?

SHOUKO'S GONE! NOW'S OUR ONLY CHANCE!!
SHAO'S IN DANGER!
DECLARATION!
断言!!

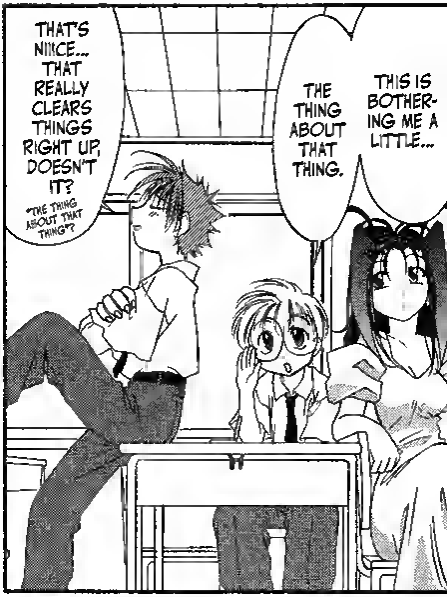

UGH... YOU...
UH HUH. YOU'RE WRONG, TAKASHI.
NOOO, THIS ISN'T THE RIGHT TIME. DON'T YOU AGREE, KOICHI-ROU? ☆

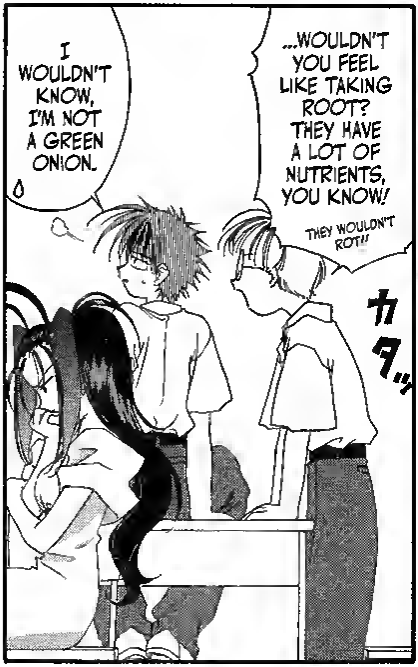
WOW. MISS KIRYUU, YOU'RE AMAZ-ING.
YOU'VE FIGURED OUT WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO HERE, HAVEN'T YOU?
I WONDER IF I HAVE TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO FIGURE THAT OUT BY MYSELF TOO?
IF YOU CANNOT FIND A WAY YOURSELF, THEN IT WOULD BE WISE TO ASK MY LIEGE.
HMM ...
YOU SHALL FIGURE OUT WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO AS WELL, WILL YOU NOT?

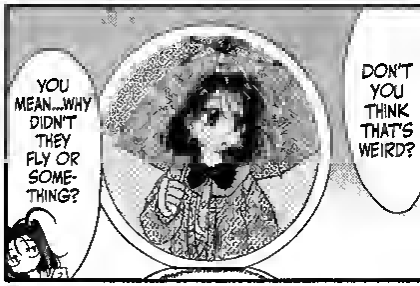

BUT IF YOU DO NOT LIKE THE FACT YOU CANNOT FIND IT, THEN...
...IT CANNOT BE HELPED.
I DON'T KNOW.
IS IT ALL RIGHT TO DO THAT?
...IT FEELS LIKE MASTER TASUKE AND I HAVEN'T TALKED IN A LONG TIME.
SOME-HOW...
IT FEELS LIKE I NEED COURAGE JUST TO SEE HIM EVERY DAY.
I WONDER WHY.
I DON'T THINK
..I HAVE THE COURAGE TO ASK HIM SOME-THING LIKE THAT.

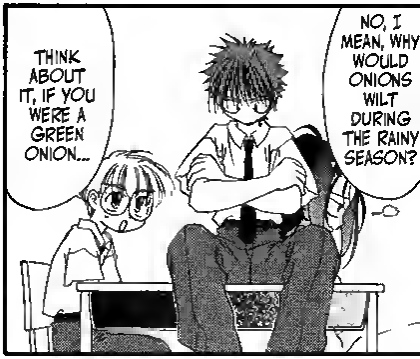

MISS SHAO...
MISS SHAO.
THERE IS ONLY ONE THING I CAN SAY.
YES.
YES, KOICHIROU?
YOU RAISED YOUR HAND THAT'S THE SPIRIT

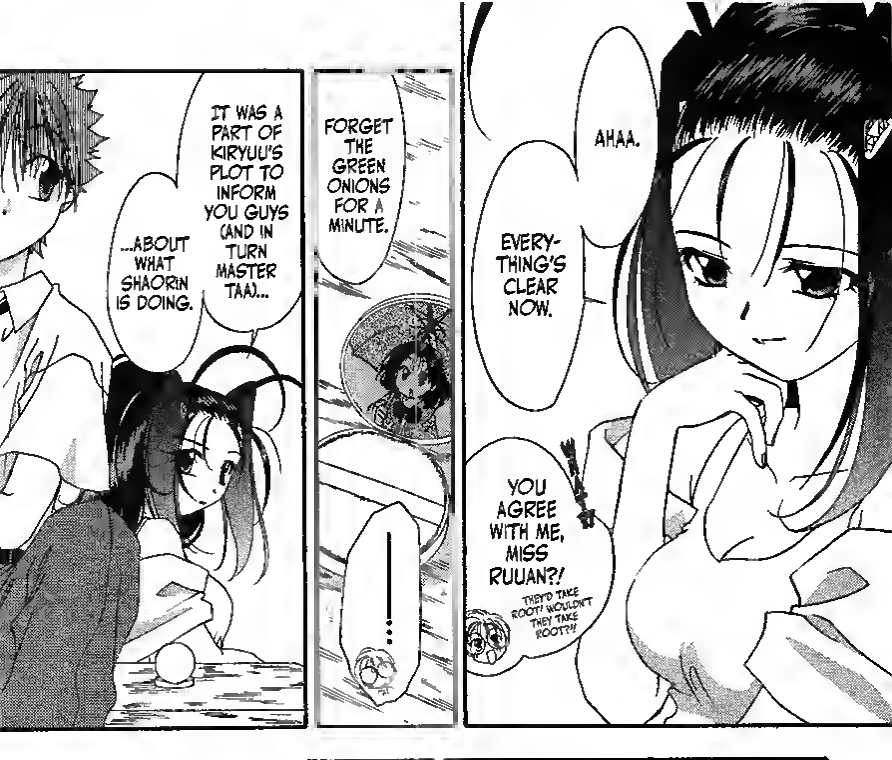
KAORI SAID SHE RAN INTO SHAO AND MISS KIRYUU...
...WHEN SHE WENT TO THE STORE TO BUY GREEN ONIONS YESTERDAY BECAUSE HERS WERE WILTED.

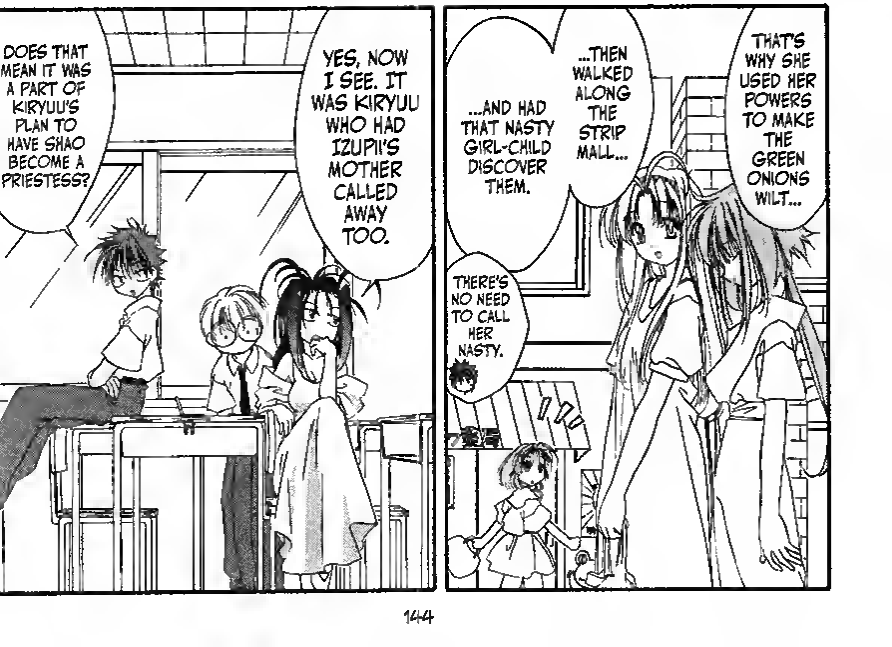

GETS HIMSELF WORKED UP
THAT'S NIIICE... THAT REALLY CLEARS THINGS RIGHT UP, DOESN'T IT?
"THE THING ABOUT THAT THING"?
THE THING ABOUT THAT THING.
THIS IS BOTHERING ME A LITTLE...


I WOULDN'T KNOW, I'M NOT A GREEN ONION.
...WOULDN'T YOU FEEL LIKE TAKING ROOT? THEY HAVE A LOT OF NUTRIENTS, YOU KNOW!
THEY WOULDN'T ROT!!
カタッ


YOU MEAN...WHY DIDN'T THEY FLY OR SOMETHING?
DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S WEIRD?


THINK ABOUT IT, IF YOU WERE A GREEN ONION...
NO, I MEAN, WHY WOULD ONIONS WILT DURING THE RAINY SEASON?


AHAA.
EVERY-THING'S CLEAR NOW.
YOU AGREE WITH ME, MISS RUUAN?!
THEY'D TAKE ROOT? WOULDN'T THEY TAKE ROOT?!
FORGET THE GREEN ONIONS FOR A MINUTE.
IT WAS A PART OF KIRYUU'S PLOT TO INFORM YOU GUYS (AND IN TURN MASTER TAA)...
...ABOUT WHAT SHAORIN IS DOING.


THAT'S WHY SHE USED HER POWERS TO MAKE THE GREEN ONIONS WILT...
...THEN WALKED ALONG THE STRIP MALL...
...AND HAD THAT NASTY GIRL-CHILD DISCOVER THEM.
THERE'S NO NEED TO CALL HER NASTY.
YES, NOW I SEE. IT WAS KIRYUU WHO HAD IZUPII'S MOTHER CALLED AWAY TOO.
DOES THAT MEAN IT WAS A PART OF KIRYUU'S PLAN TO HAVE SHAO BECOME A PRIESTESS?

COULD IT BE? WOULD KIRYUU USE PEOPLE LIKE THAT?
I DON'T GET WHY SHE'D DO IT, TO BEGIN WITH.
KIRYUU WOULD.
WHY?
IF YOU WATCH HER CLOSELY, YOU CAN TELL SHE'S LIKE THAT.
HEEEY, YOU GUYS ARE IGNORING ME AGAIN.
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
MISS KAORI.

I'M RETURNING TASUKE'S UMBRELLA TO HIM.
IS THAT SO?
HERE, I WILL GIVE IT TO HIM.
TH-THAT'S OKAY!!
I BORROWED IT, SO I WANT TO MAKE SURE HE GETS IT BACK!!
YOU SHOULDN'T MEDDLE.
YOU WILL ONLY END UP GETTING HURT.
WH-WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
IF YOU DO NOT INTEND TO GIVE UP ON MY LIEGE, THEN...

adverse
Mal
.....

...I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO USE YOU.

AWW... WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU EXPECT OF MY DARLING? ♡
HE'S SO HANDSOME WHEN HE'S LL WET AND RUNNING THROUGH THE RAIN. AIN LOOKS SOOO GOOD ON HIM.
WELLLL NOW.
I WONDER WHAT'S GOING ON WITH MASTER TAAA? ♡
GRR.
SO SHE CAME
WE'VE RUN INTO EACH OTHER ...
...A LOT TODAY.

WHAT?
...ALL RIGHT?
ARE... YOU...
UH, NOTHING, IF YOU'RE ALL RIGHT THEN IT'S COOL.
THAT MEANS WHATEVER SHE'S PLANNING HASN'T HAPPENED YET.
SIGH
HEY... WAIT!!

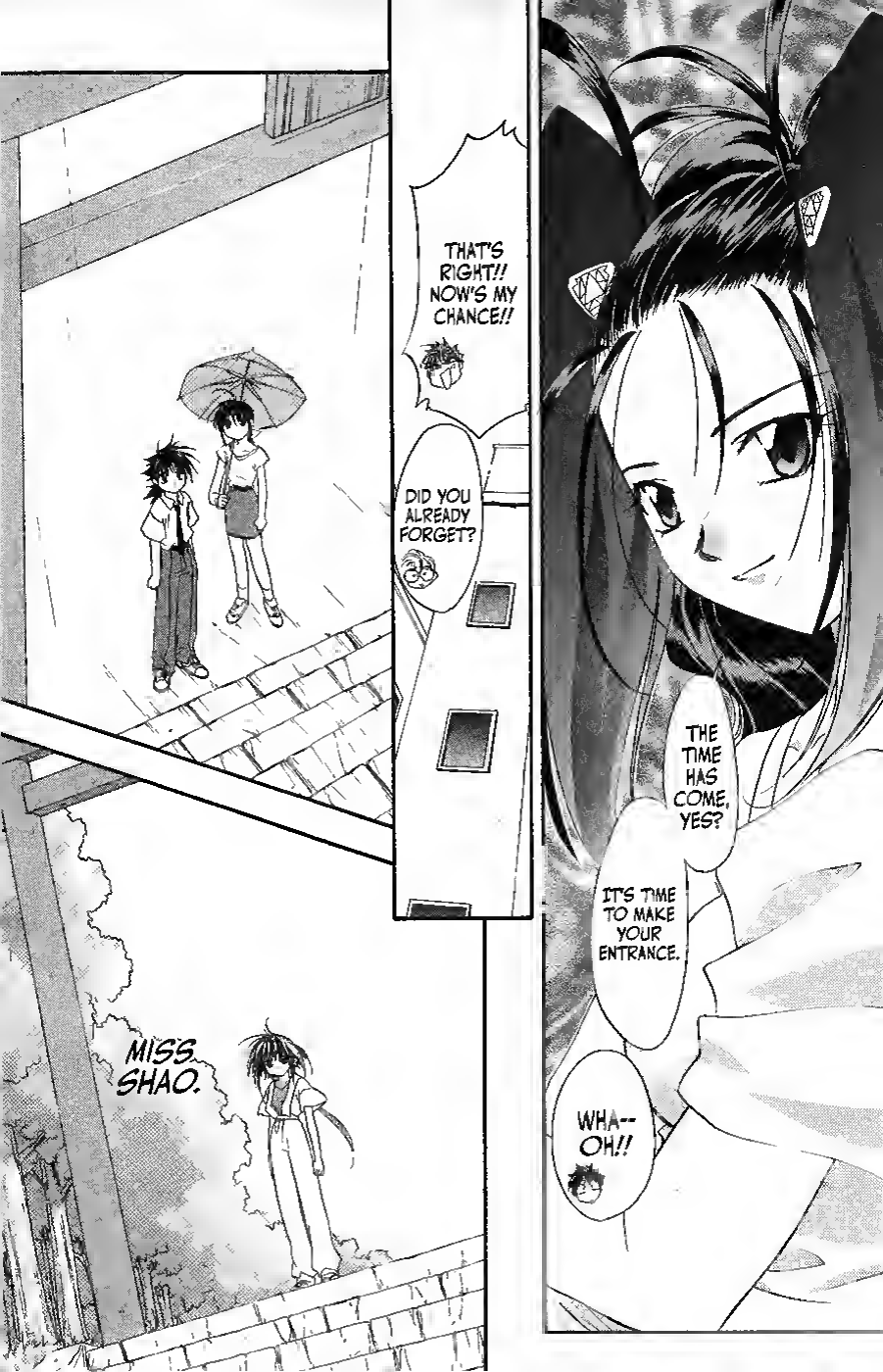
OH, SORRY.
SHE'S ALONE RIGHT NOW.
WHAT ...?
WHAT ABOUT SHAO?
IS SHE DOING ALL RIGHT TOO?
NOT THAT...
OOH. SO THIS IS A MENTAL CHALLENGE OR SOMETHING.
THEN HE'S NOT ALL RIGHT
I SHOULD JUST LEAVE HER ALONE.
...SHAO'S SICK OF ME NOW SO...
I SEE...
KIRYUU TOLD ME...
HUH?
WELL ..

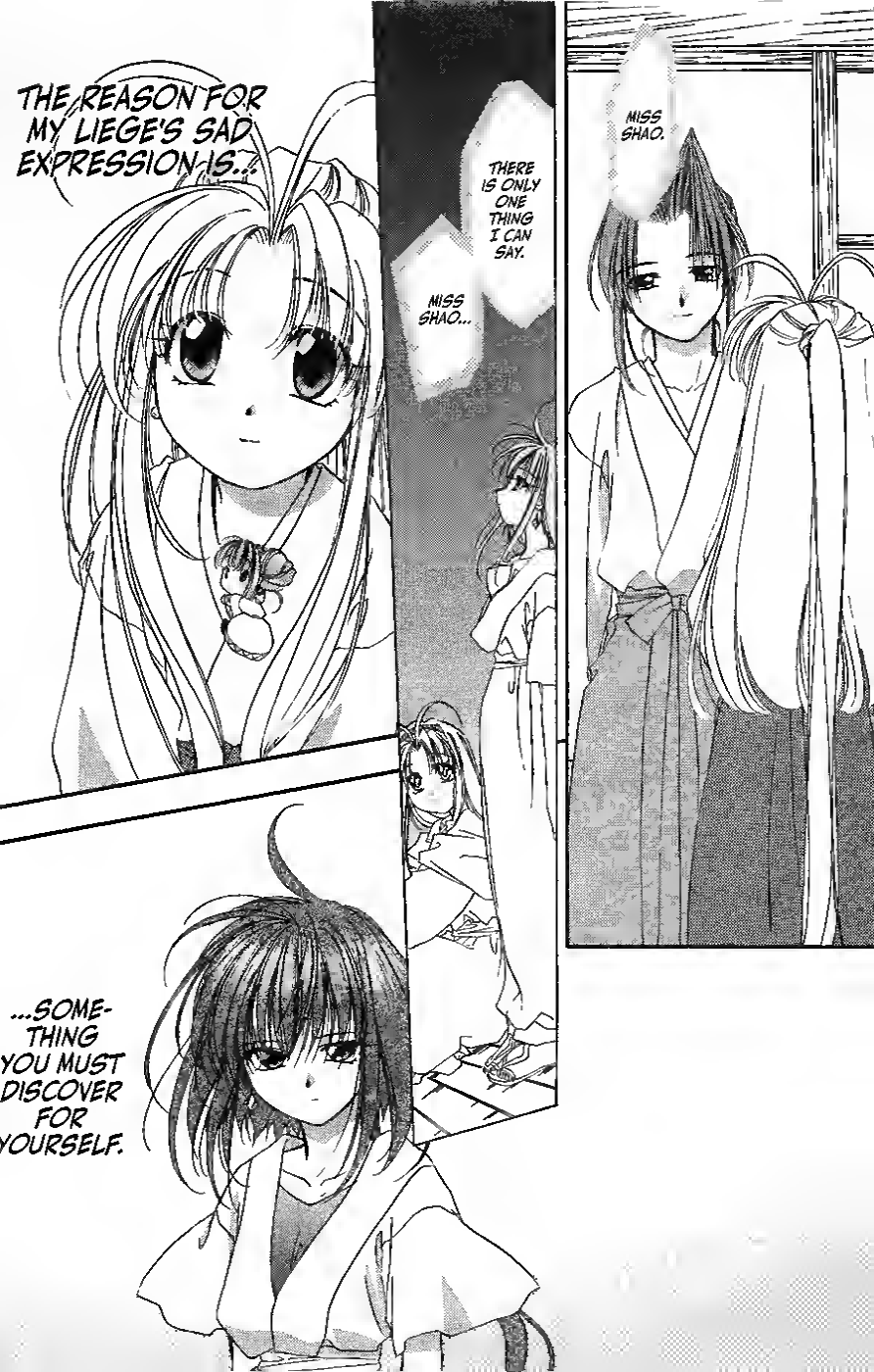
.....
WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO DO?
EVERY-THING'S SO COMPLI-CATED, SO...
...I'VE DECIDED TO DEAL WITH IT ALL WHEN I'M OLDER.
I COMPLETE-LY AGREE WITH WHAT YOU SAID EARLIER.
WHICH WAS...?
SOME THINGS YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT UNTIL YOU'RE OLDER.
OH, THAT.
BUT FOR NOW...

EVEN IF SHE DOESN'T LIKE ME...
...I'M GOING TO GET SHAO BACK!!
...I STILL LIKE HER!
I'M GOING TO TELL HER HOW I FEEL.
LIKE I SHOULD HAVE ALL ALONG.

THAT'S GREAT!
I'M HAPPY FOR YOU!!
AS WE SPEAK, SHAORIN IS ALONE IN A LUSTFUL MAN'S HOUSE!!
GOOD JOB, MISS SHOUKO
REFERRING TO SHOUKO WITH RESPECT FOR THE FIRST TIME
TAKASHI
YOU'RE RUNNING OUT OF TIME! YOU WON'T MAKE IT!
MISS KIRYUU, YOU MISREAD THINGS.
BUT TOO BAD, EH?
OH, MISS RUUAN.
SO THAT MEANS SHE DID ALL THIS TO GET MASTER TAA TO COME AROUND.
AHA ...
I SHOULD HAVE EXPECTED AS MUCH FROM THE BANNAN CHITEN.

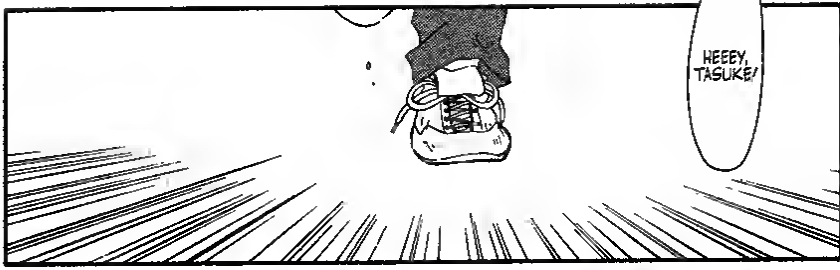
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!
SHAO HAS THE DOOR JAMMED! SHE'S SAFE!!
THE QUESTION IS, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A LOOK-SEE?
MISS SHAORIN, ARE YOU IN THERE?
WHAT ...?
MISS SHAO-RIN?
OH, YES!
IS SOMETHING THE MATTER, MR. IZUMO?
AAAAAAAHHHHH!!
THE DOOR WAS JAMMED.
THAT'S RIGHT! THAT'S SO RIGHT! THAT'S HOW SHAO IS!!
SHOUKO YOU SHOULD'VE PLANNED THIS BETTER!!
TEE HEE. ♡IT LOOKS LIKE MASTER TAA AND COMPANY HAVE REACHED THEIR DESTI-NATION...

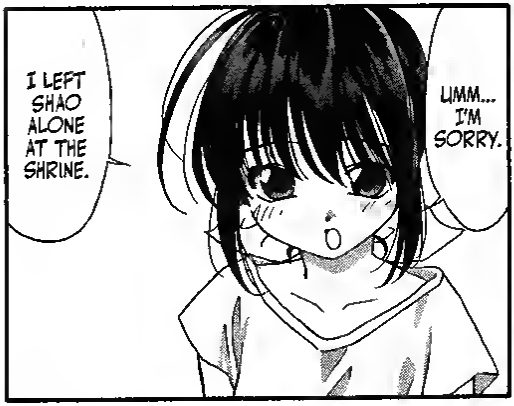

THE TIME HAS COME, YES?
IT'S TIME TO MAKE YOUR ENTRANCE.
WHA-- OH!!
THAT'S RIGHT!! NOW'S MY CHANCE!!
DID YOU ALREADY FORGET?
MISS. SHAO.


THE REASON FOR MY LIEGE'S SAD EXPRESSION IS...?
MISS SHAO...
THERE IS ONLY ONE THING I CAN SAY.
MISS SHAO.
...SOMETHING YOU MUST DISCOVER FOR YOURSELF.

AS A SHUGOCETTEN...
...IT IS MY DUTY...
...TO PROTECT YOU.
TO PROTECT YOUR HEART.
I WONDER...
...WHAT I'M PROTECTING NOW?

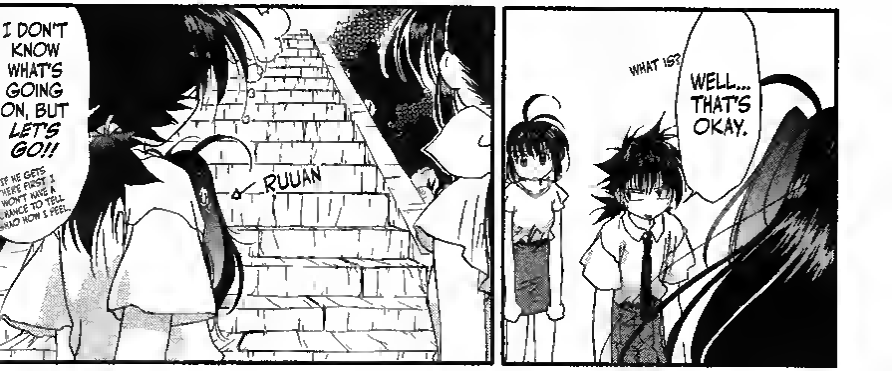
CHAPTER 62
SHAORIN OF MIYAUCHI SHRINE
(PART 3)

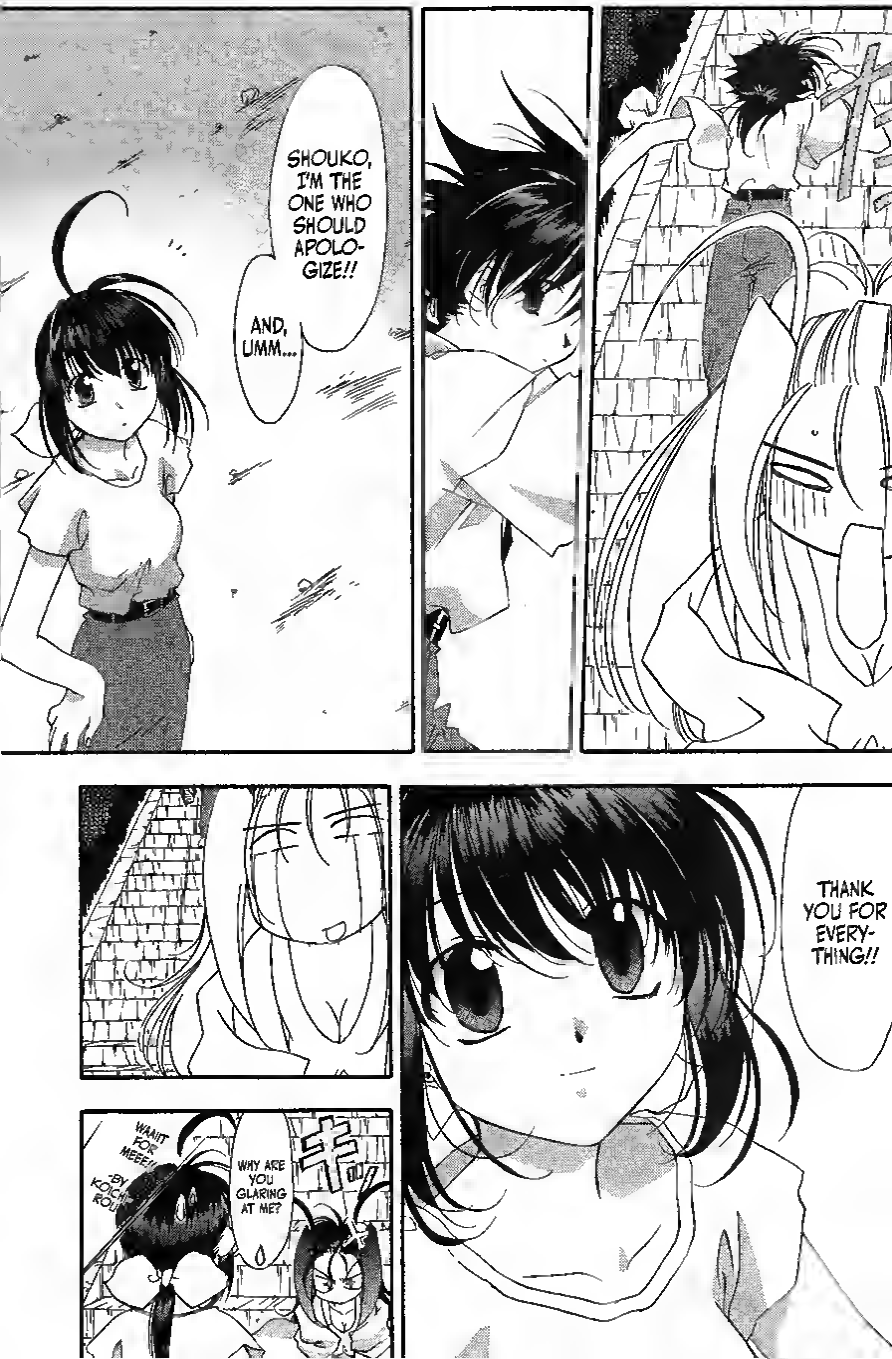

HEEEY, TASUKE!


I LEFT SHAO ALONE AT THE SHRINE.
UMM... I'M SORRY.

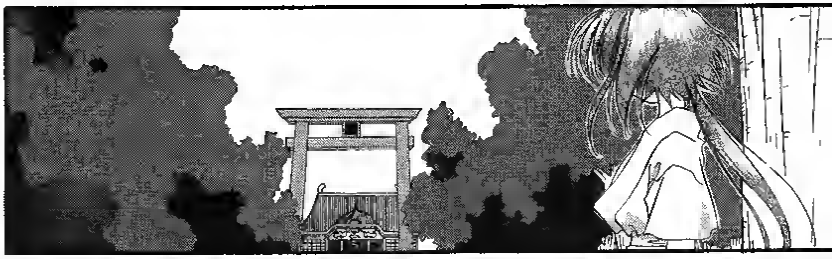
SAY WHAT?
.....?!

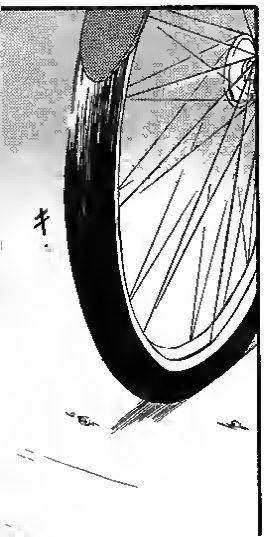
"YOU NAILED THE DRAMATIC ENTRANCE. YOU LOOK SO HOT! YOU'RE THE BEST, RUUAN! OOOH, I'M GLAD I WORE A LONG, FLOWING SKIRT. ♡ IT CATCHES THE WIND PERFECTLY." A GLIMPSE INTO RUUAN'S INNER THOUGHTS.
SHAAOOOOO!!
WHAT THE--?
.....
.....


I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, BUT LET'S GO!!
IF HE GETS THERE FIRST, I WON'T HAVE A CHANCE TO TELL HIM HOW I FEEL.
RUUAN
WHAT IS?
WELL... THAT'S OKAY.


SHOUKO, I'M THE ONE WHO SHOULD APOLO-GIZE!!
AND, UMM...
THANK YOU FOR EVERY-THING!!
WHY ARE YOU GLARING AT ME?
WAAIT FOR MEEE!!
-BY KOCHI RIOU-

WHA... WHAT IS THIIS?!!
YOU COULDA KILLED ME!
WAAAAAAAH?!!
THAT... LOOKED COOL.

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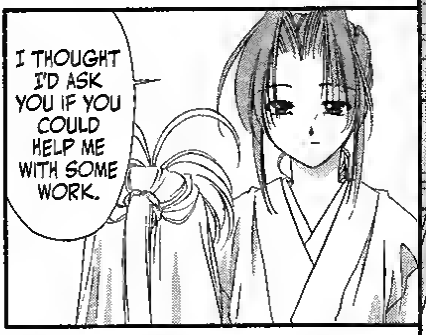

I THOUGHT I'D ASK YOU IF YOU COULD HELP ME WITH SOME WORK.

EXCUSE ME, MISS SHAORIN.
MIYAUCHI

ISN'T SHE HERE?
OH? WHERE'S SHOUKO?

OKAAY! I'LL GET THERE BEFORE HIM, LET'S GO!! ♡
MIYAUCH! BY CAR
TASUKE'S TRYING TO GET TO SHAO AND MISS KIRYUU IS TRYING TO STOP HIM!!
THAT'S WHAT I FIGURED. KAORI IS SO AMAZING. I'M LIKE A MASTER DETECTIVE! ♡
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT!
THOSE WHO OBEY THE HEAVENS PREVAIL. THOSE WHO DEFY THE NITTEN PERISH
THAT WHICH DOES NOT HAVE A WILL... ..AWAKEN BY MY POWER.
YOUTEN-SHIN SHOURAI!

DARUMA, ATTACK!! GO!!!
BANSHOU TAIRAN
MASTER TAA, LOOK OOUUT!!

!!
RU...
RUUAN.

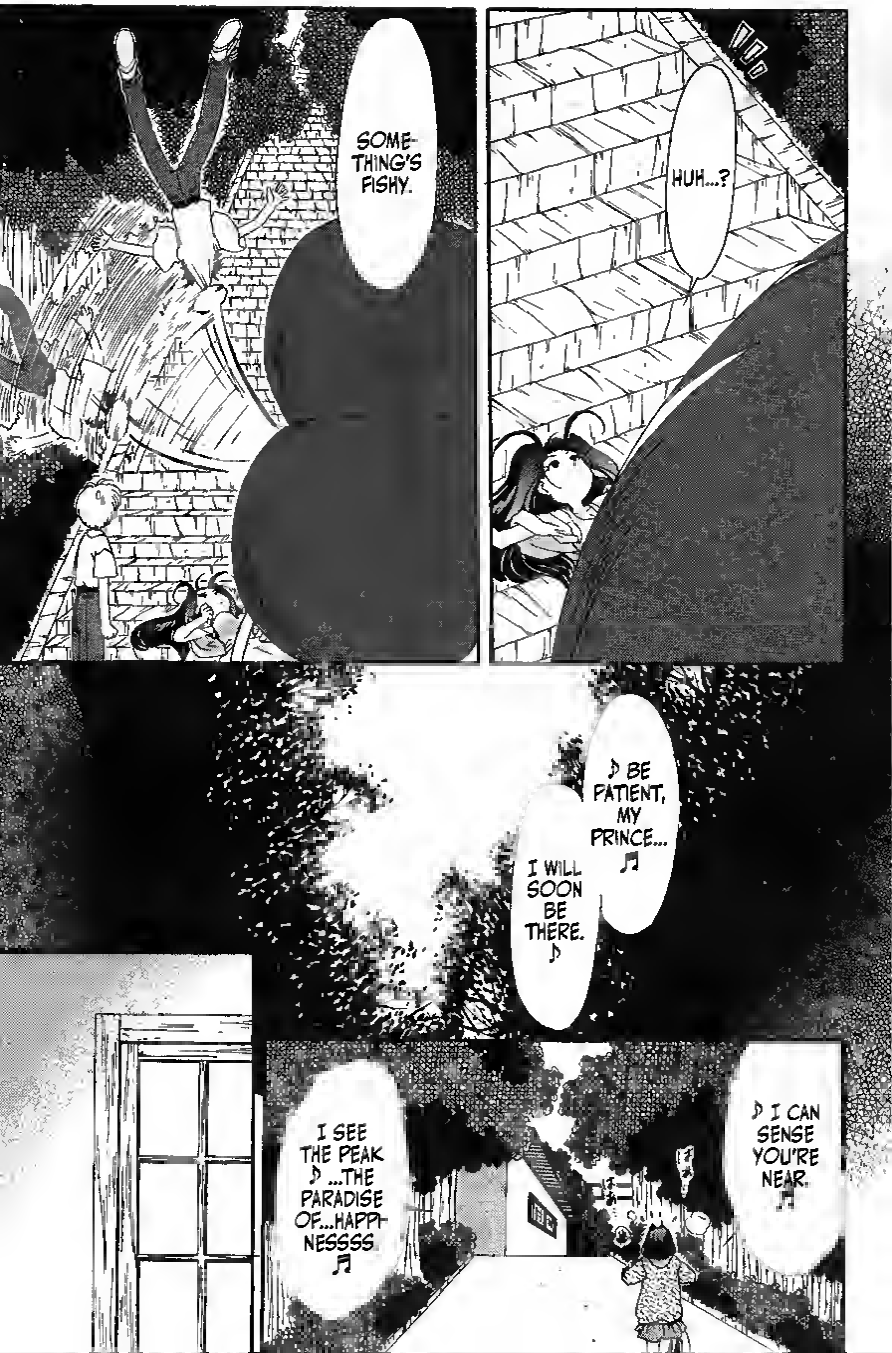
OH... THEN ...
DO YOU HAVE A MOMENT TO TALK?
THERE IS SOME-THING I'D REALLY LIKE TO TELL YOU.
YES...?
LYRICS BY LOVE ANGEL (PEN NAME).
COMPO-SITION BY LOVE ANGEL (PEN NAME).
LA LA LAH HUM HUUM. LA LA LAH HUM HUUM. ♪♪♬
AH HA HA. OOH, MY PRINCE. ♪
MY BELOVED PRIIINCE. ♪♬

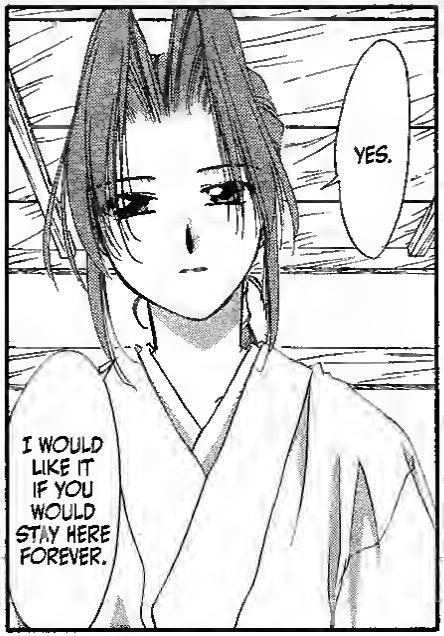
♪ OOH, MY PRIIINCE. IF YOU FORGET YOUR UMBREL-LALA. ♪
I WILL ♪ SURELY BRING IT TO YOU. ♫
♪ WE SHARE A BOND YOU AND I... ♫
...WHICH IS ♪ THIS UMBREL-LALA. ♫
♪ DO YOU THINK AN AMBUSH S UNFAIR? ♪
♫ MAYBE SO, BUT IT REALLY WORKS, OU KNOW-OW-OW. ♫

NNG...
MY STRENGTH... IS LEAVING ME!!
STRANGE I THINK... I'M HEARING THINGS ...NNGH
TAA... MASTER TAA.
I-I'M OKAY. DON'T... MIND ME...
!!!
PLEASE GOOO!!
TH--
THANKS.
SEE YA
OOOH! WAAIIT!!
ARE YOU REALLY GOING? (CRIES)

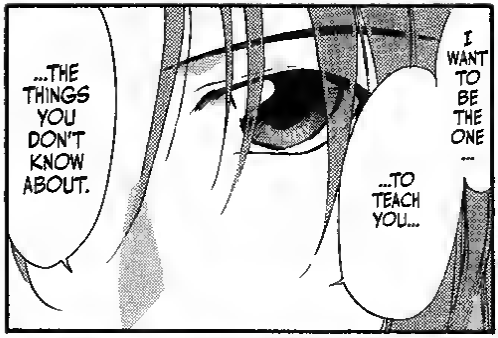
WHAT?! WHAT IS IT AL-READY?!
I'M IN A HURRY!!
HMPH... WELL, IT'S NOTHING. ♡
I LOVE THAT LOOK ON YOUR FACE...
...SO I'LL LET YOU OFF TODAY.

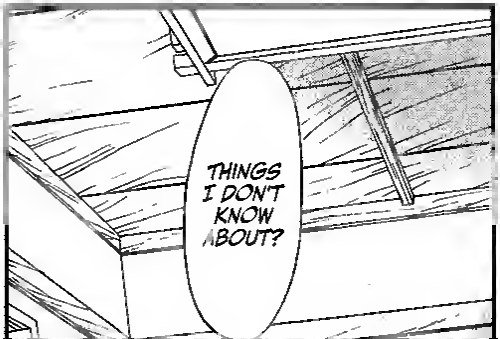
YOU SHOULD ALWAYS HAVE THIS KIND OF DETER-MINATION.
I JUST WANT YOU...
...TO BE HEALTHY AND HAPPY.
MISS RUUAN! I'LL SAVE YOU NOW!
WOW. THAT LOOKS FUUN.
YOU, YOUU!!
THAT'S OKAY, TAKASHI. FORGET ABOUT ME!!


SOMETHING'S FISHY.
HUH...?
♪ BE PATIENT, MY PRINCE... ♬
I WILL SOON BE THERE. ♪
♪ I CAN SENSE YOU'RE NEAR. ♬
I SEE THE PEAK ♪ ...THE PARADISE OF...HAPPINESSSS ♬


YES.
I WOULD LIKE IT IF YOU WOULD STAY HERE FOREVER.

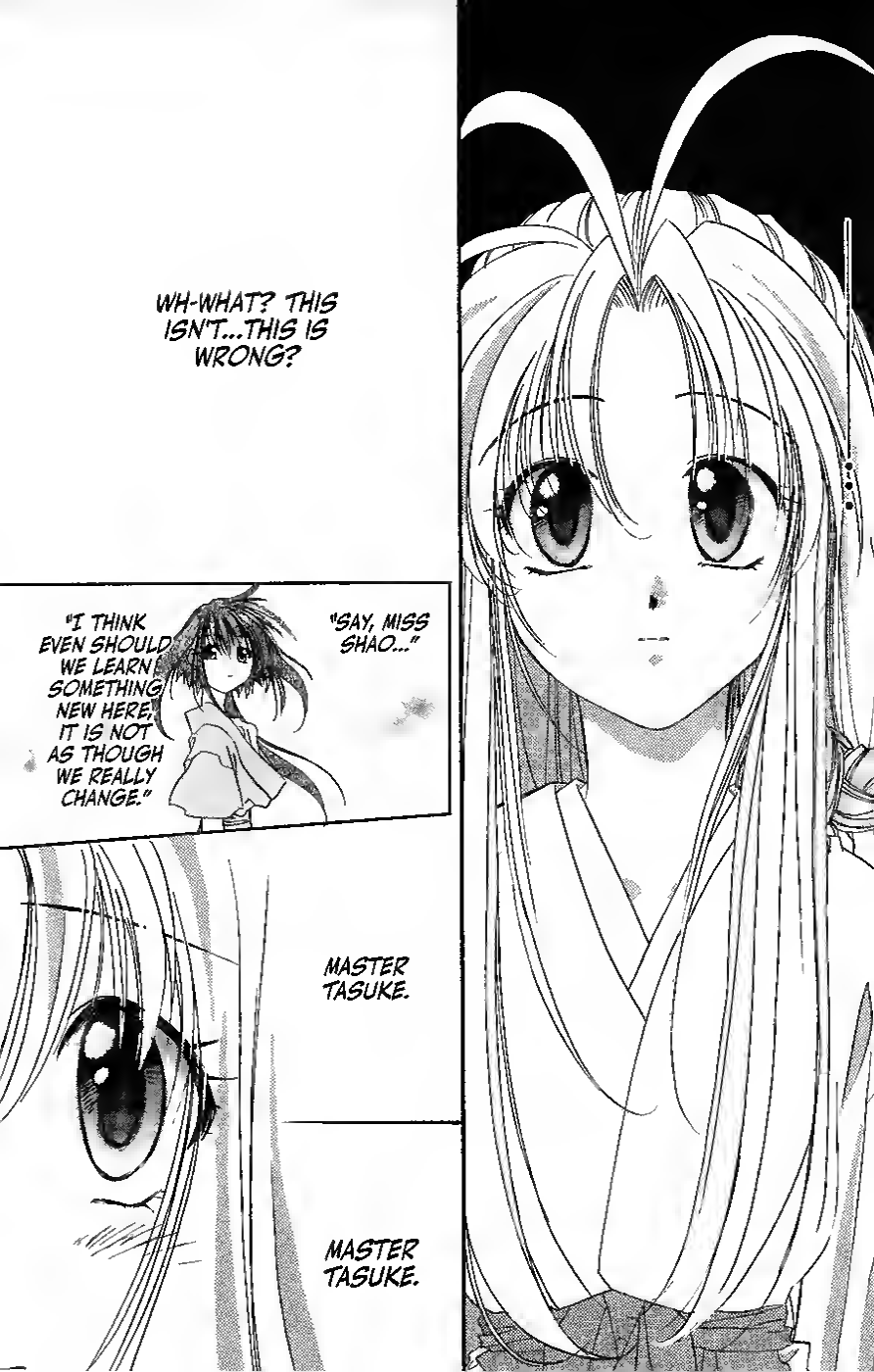
WHAT ...?
FOR-EVER?

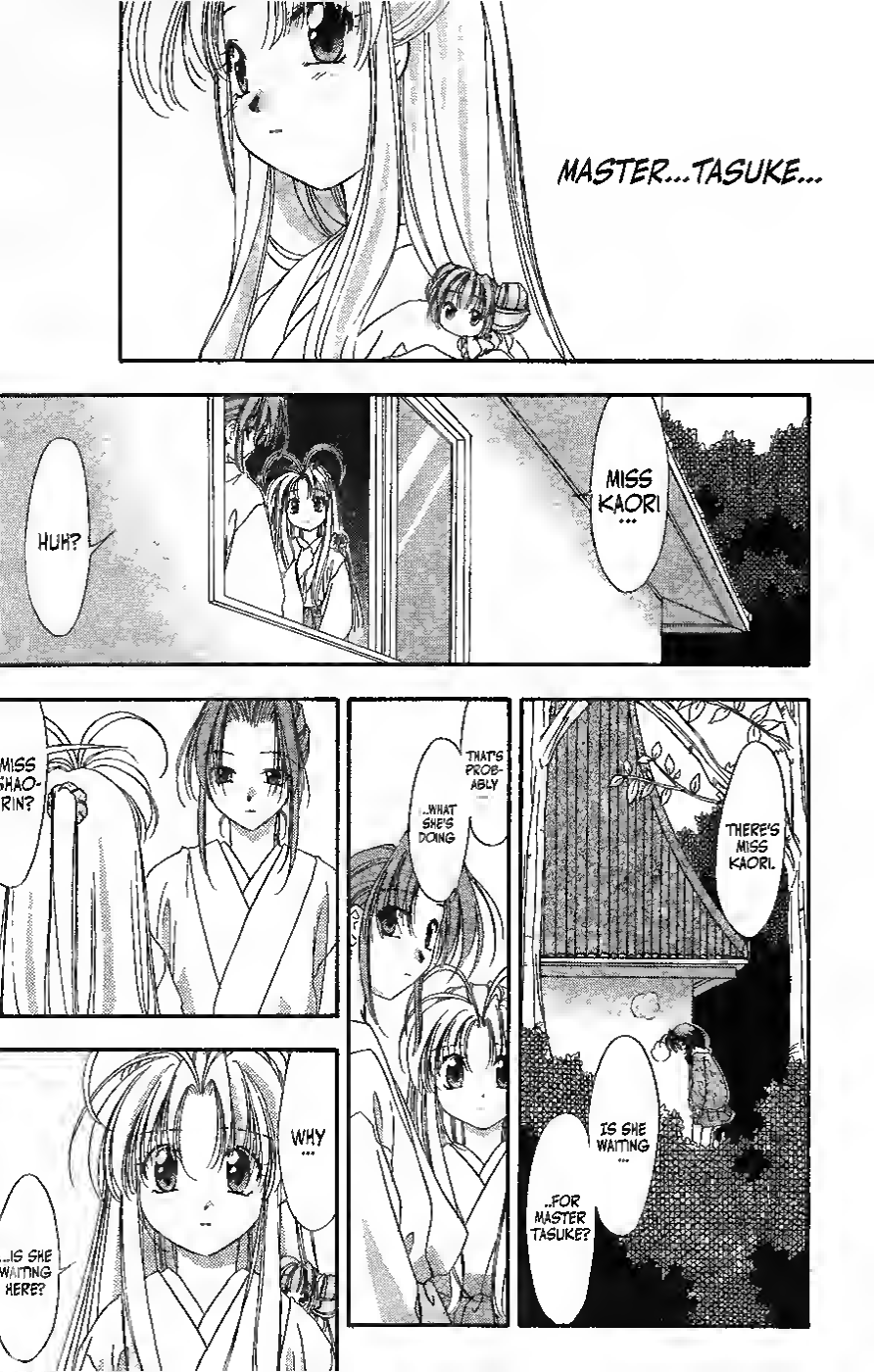

I WANT TO BE THE ONE ...
...TO TEACH YOU...
...THE THINGS YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT.


THINGS I DON'T KNOW ABOUT?

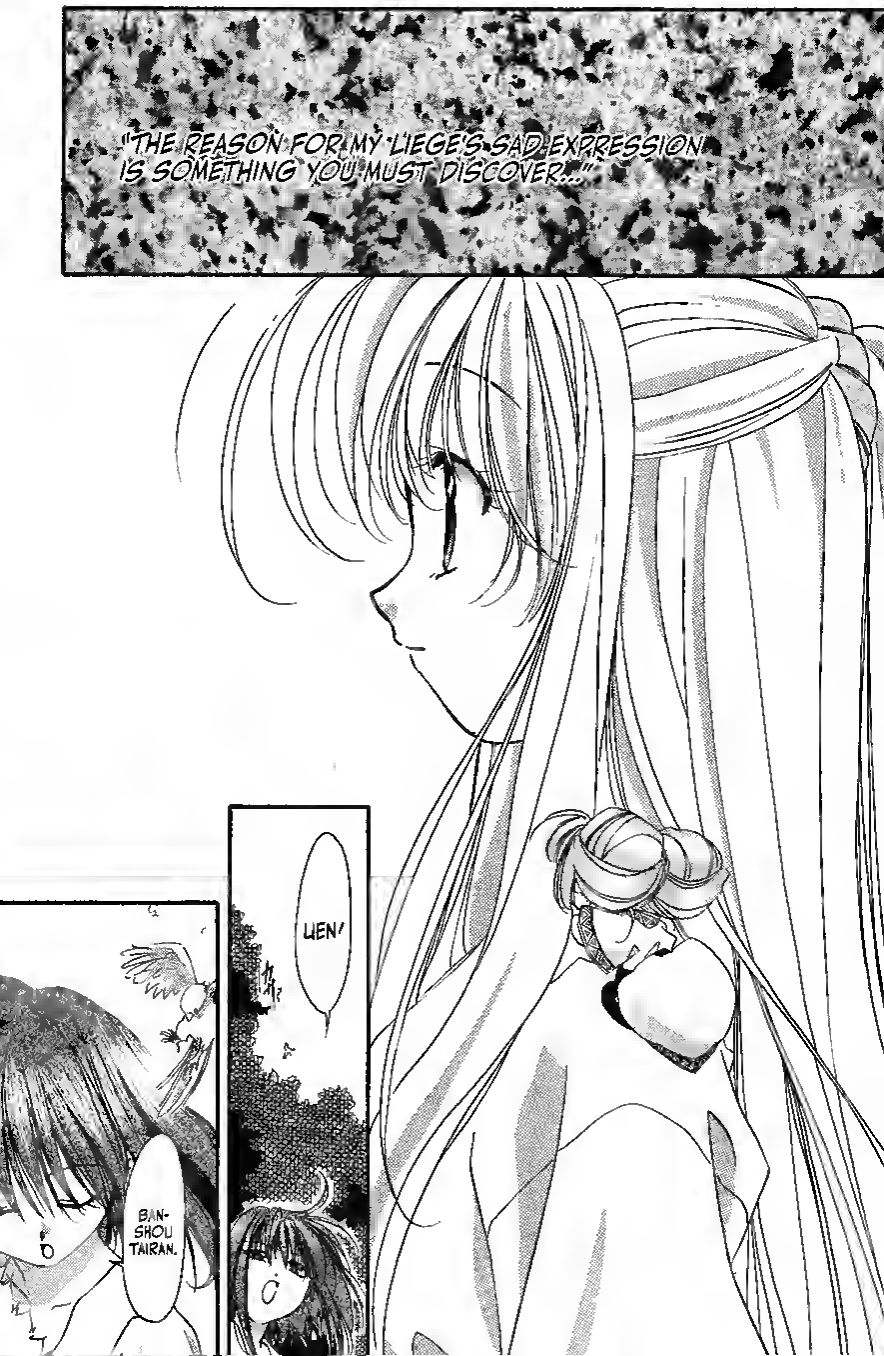
.....

...I DON'T KNOW ABOUT...
THINGS...
"WILL THEY GO AWAY IF I CHANGE?"
"THIS GLOOMY FEELING I CAN'T SHAKE. THIS INSECURITY."
"IF I CAN UNDERSTAND THAT THING I DON'T UNDERSTAND, WILL I BE ABLE TO CHANGE?"
MR. IZUMO...
REALLY...

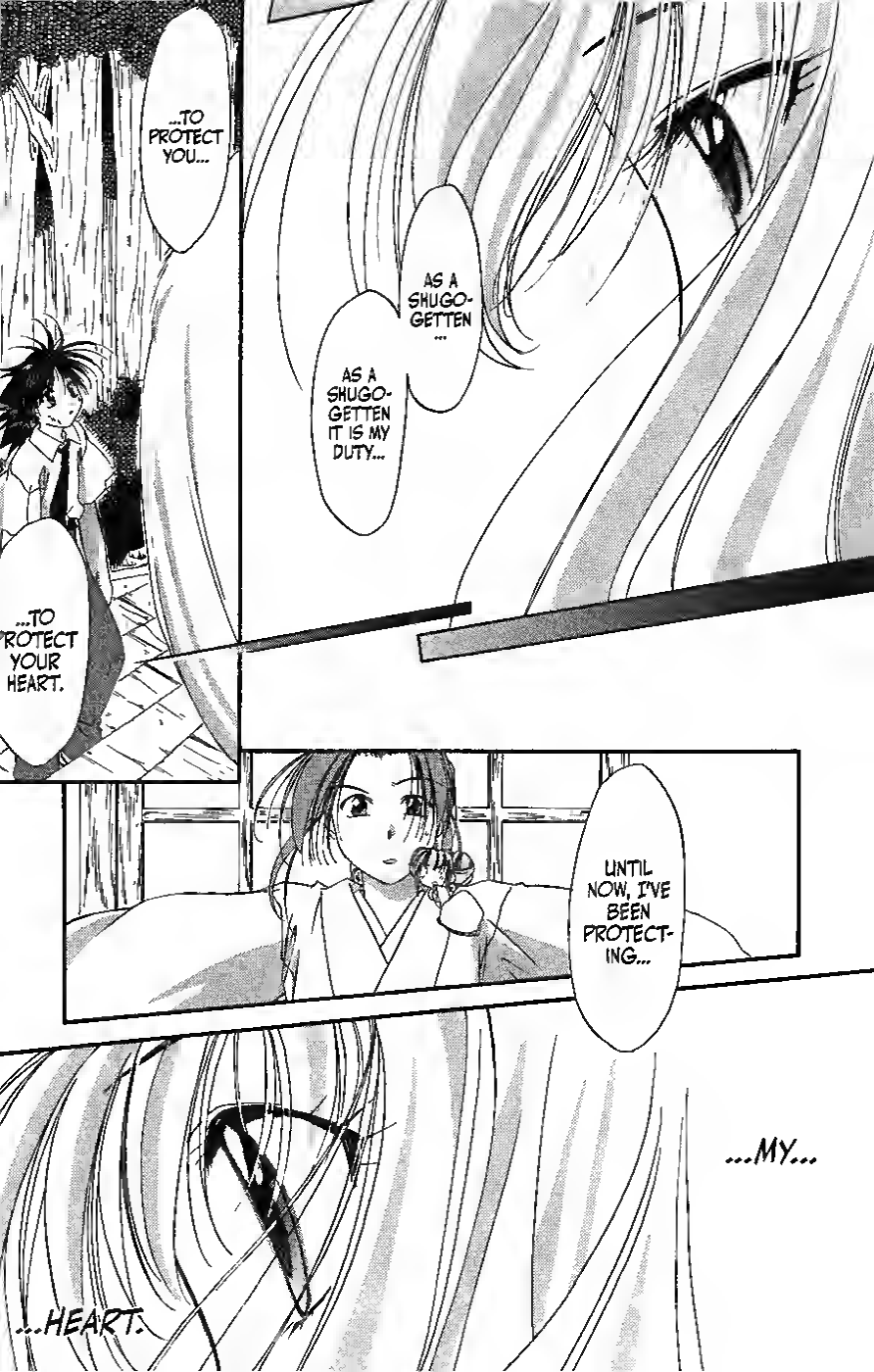

WH-WHAT? THIS ISN'T...THIS IS WRONG?
"SAY, MISS SHAO..."
"I THINK EVEN SHOULD WE LEARN SOMETHING NEW HERE, IT IS NOT AS THOUGH WE REALLY CHANGE."
MASTER TASUKE.
MASTER TASUKE.


MASTER...TASUKE...
MISS KAORI...
HUH?
THERE'S MISS KAORI.
IS SHE WAITING...
..FOR MASTER TASUKE?
THAT'S PROBABLY
..WHAT SHE'S DOING
MISS SHAO-RIN?
WHY...
...IS SHE WAITING HERE?

WHY IS SHE WAITING HERE?
WHY IS SHE WAITING THERE?
TEE HEE. ♡
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT MASTER TASUKE?
I CAME OVER TO PLAY!
WHY IS IT SO PAINFUL? WHY IS SO SAD?
SAD?
...SAD.


"THE REASON FOR MY LIEGE'S SAD EXPRESSION IS SOMETHING YOU MUST DISCOVER..."
UEN!
BAN-SHOU TAIRAN.

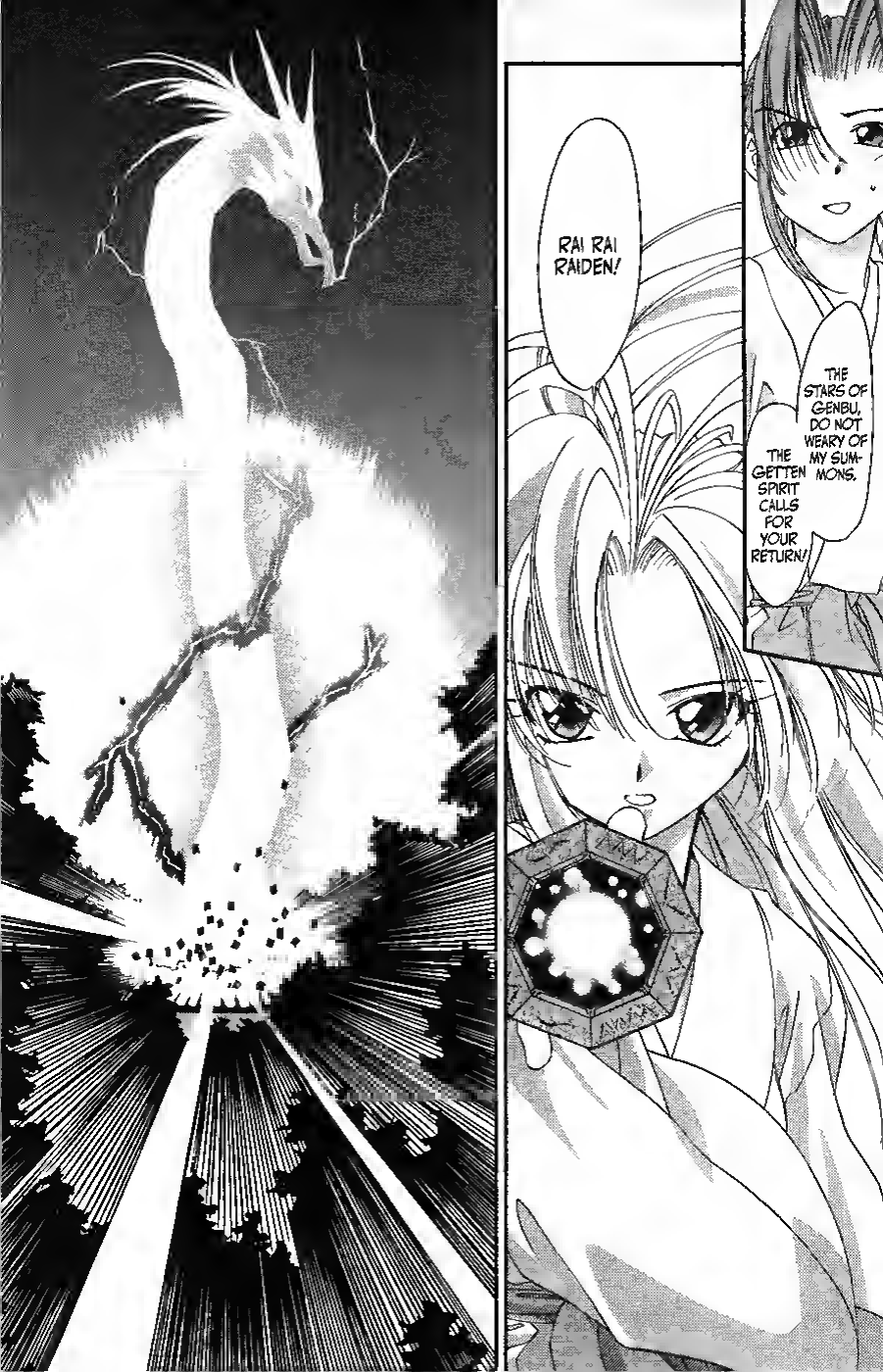
I KNEW IT.
SHE'S STILL PLOTTING SOMETHING. SOMETHING'S GOING ON.
"...FOR YOURSELF."
SHE KEEPS TRYING TO STOP HIM.
MAYBE SHE PLANNED FOR SHAORIN TO BE ALONE!


...TO PROTECT YOU...
...TO PROTECT YOUR HEART.
AS A SHUGO-GETTEN ...
AS A SHUGO-GETTEN IT IS MY DUTY...
UNTIL NOW, I'VE BEEN PROTECT-ING...
...MY...
...HEART.

THIS IS ALL I CAN DO...
...MR. TASUKE.
GO.
...KAY.
O...
HMM. WHEN IT COMES TO CUNNING, SHE'S THE BEST.
RUUAN'S IMPRESSED.

DO YOU REALIZE ...
...THIS IS ONLY THE BEGIN-NING?
MY LIEGE.

SHA...
SHAO?!
FROM THE STARS THAT LIGHT THE HEAV-ENS...
...COME FORTH!


RAI RAI RAIDEN!
THE STARS OF GENBU, DO NOT WEARY OF MY SUMMONS.
THE GETTEN SPIRIT CALLS FOR YOUR RETURN!

MAMOTTE SHUGOGETTEN 9: THE END